

SAIN T PAULS.

JULY, 1869.

THE THREE BROTHERS.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ELDEST SON.

THE young men separated when they left the Manor,—one to his farm, and another to his merchandise, as Laurie said. It is our business at the present moment to follow only the elder. Ben went back to his chambers in the Albany, his personal head-quarters, though he did not occupy them for more than three months in the year. Though he was called Ben, his name was the solemn family name of Benedict. It suited him better than the contraction. He was one of those men who are in the way of taking things very much in earnest,—too much in earnest some people thought. The fashion of the period had accustomed him to the light outward appearance and pretence of general indifference common to his kind; but in his heart he was not indifferent to anything. He had felt his advantages keenly, taking all the more anxious care that no one should suspect him of doing so; and he felt his downfall now, to the bottom of his heart. He went back to London, which seemed the only place to go to in the emergency. He had been on a pleasant visit at a pleasant house when the call came to his father's death-bed. Now, in September, when he had not a friend remaining in town, he took his solitary way there, and went to the handsome, forlorn rooms, the very rent of which would now have swallowed up so great a part of his income. He went in listlessly, amid all the tokens of his former life, almost hating the signs of a luxury so far beyond his means. Ben had taste as well as Laurie, though in a different way. His chambers were furnished daintily, as became a man accustomed to spend as he pleased and spare nothing. It had always been a comfort to Mr. Renton's practical eye, that his son's knick-knacks were all knick-knacks of a thoroughly saleable kind,—things which had

a real value ; and the same thought, as he entered, brought a smile upon Ben's face. "I shall make some money out of the d——d trash," he said to himself bitterly, thrusting away with his foot a little graceful guéridon, on which stood a Sèvres déjeuner service. The toy tottered, and would have fallen, but that he put out his hand by instinct to save it. Then,—if the reader will not despise him for it,—it must be allowed that Ben sank down into a chair, and did something equivalent to what a woman would have done had she cried. He muttered ill things of himself under his breath,—he called himself a confounded fool to risk by his ill-temper anything that might bring him the money he stood so much in need of,—and then he covered his eyes with his hands, and felt a sudden contraction in his throat. He had nobody to appeal to, nobody to consult. He had the problem of life to resolve for himself as he best could, and he had lost a father whom he loved, not a week before. All these thoughts came over him as he went into his old rooms, where all his favourite possessions were. Of course, neither the rooms nor their ornaments could be retained. All that Ben could pretend to now was of a much humbler description ; but he would not hand over to another even the pain of putting things in order, and making ready for the final sacrifice. His servant would have to be given up too. He had not the means of hiring help to do anything that he could do for himself. Henceforward he would have to learn to do things for himself, and here was the first thing to do.

It is true that he would have given up these same rooms without a pang for various other reasons ;—had he been going to take possession of the house in Berkeley Square, which now, he supposed, would either be let or shut up ;—had he been going abroad, or indeed, for almost any other reasonable cause ;—just as the people would do who break their hearts over the hall, or rectory, or deceased father's house, which they would have abandoned joyfully a dozen times in as many years, had a pleasant chance come in their way. It was the wreck of circumstance surrounding this change which wounded Ben : the breaking up of all his habits, and failure of everything he had been used to. When he had recovered himself a little, he took a disconsolate stroll through the rooms, and reckoned up what his things had cost him ;—his pictures,—some of which were copies picked up abroad, and some chef-d'œuvres of young artists at home, which Laurie had persuaded him to give good prices for ;—the cabinets he had attained after unexampled efforts at Lady Bertram's sale,—his choice little collection of old Dresden,—even his pipes and his whips, and a hundred other trifles, which, when he counted them up, had cost heaps of money. Some of them, alas ! were not even paid for, which was the worst sting of all. Ben had been in debt before now, and cared little enough, perhaps too little for it. He had felt the weight of wealth behind him, and that he could pay his arrears with-

out much difficulty when he chose to make the effort. But now everything was changed. It is only when debt becomes a necessity that it is a burden. He felt it now, dragging him down, as it were staring into his face, hemming him in. Debt for bits of china, and pretty follies of furniture! And now, for aught he could tell, he might not have enough for daily bread. To be sure, a man could not starve upon two hundred a year; but there are such different ways of starving. And his whole first year's income would not be nearly enough to pay off his rent, and his man, and the expenses of the break up, not to speak of tradesmen. Such reflections were so novel to him that he sat down again in despair, with his brain going round and round. He did not even know how to set about being ruined. There was nobody in town likely to buy his pretty things at this time of the year, or to take his rooms off his hands. He had come up fully resolved to be sufficient to himself, to manage everything himself, and to give no one the opportunity of pity or remark. But it was less easy than he supposed. As for his servant, he had been with him at the Manor, and had heard, or found out, or divined, as servants do, something of what had happened, and was not unprepared for dismissal. "Yes, sir," he said, without hesitation, when his master spoke to him. "I hope it's not that I don't give satisfaction, sir; I've always done my best."

"No, no," said Ben, with a young man's unnecessary explanatory-ness. "I can't afford now to keep anybody but myself. I am very sorry. It is not that I have any objection to you."

"Yes, sir," said the man once more. "Of course it's understood that there's board-wages, sir, if I'm sent away in a hurry before the end of the month?"

"Have what you like," said Ben, with a little indignation. "If that's all; give me a note exactly of what's owing to you, and you can take yourself off as soon as you like."

"Yes, sir; but it looks pecooliar being sent away so sudden," said the fellow, standing his ground. "Perhaps you would not mind just giving a bit of an explanation to any gentleman as may come about my character. I hope you consider I deserve a good character, sir. Gentlemen, and 'specially ladies, is very apt to ask, 'How was it as you was turned away?'"

"You may go now," said Ben, coldly. "I have nothing more to say to you. I'll give you your money as soon as you're ready to go."

"But my character, sir?" insisted the man. Ben, in his wrath, seized his hat and went off, leaving Morris holding the door open with these words on his lips. He was unreasonably angry in spite of his better judgment. The very first man he had spoken to after his downfall was so entirely indifferent to his concerns, so wrapped up in his own! What were Morris's board-wages or miserable character in comparison to Ben's overthrow and changed existence? He went

out angry—in a passion, as Morris said not without reason. Naturally, the man had his own theory of the whole matter, and held it for certain that his master had been going to the bad, or why should his father disinherit him?—to which question, indeed, it was difficult to make any answer. Ben's next errand was to a fashionable auctioneer and house-agent, who was very civil, and yet very different from what he had been when the young man of fashion took his rooms. “Going abroad, sir?” Mr. Robins said, with a certain scrutiny which made the young fellow, for the first time in his life, feel himself a doubtful character, required to give an account of himself.

“Perhaps. I can't say,” he answered; “but these rooms have become too expensive for me, anyhow, and I want to sell my things.”

“The worst possible time to do it,” said the auctioneer, shaking his head. “There is not a soul in town, sir, as you know as well as I do. Even in our humble way, we are going to the country ourselves. They would not fetch a third of their proper price now.”

“But I want the money,” said Ben; “and I can't keep up the place. I must get rid of them now.”

“I can take your orders, of course, sir,” said Mr. Robins, deprecatingly; “but it will be at a frightful sacrifice. Nobody but dealers will look at them now,—and we all know what dealers are. Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest,—a fine maxim, sir, for trade; but ruinous for fancy articles, when you have to push them to a sale, and there's nobody to buy.”

“I can't help myself,” said Ben, abruptly. He had almost said. “What would you advise me to do?” But his mind was in such a restless state, that the pendulum had veered back again to its first throb of obstinacy ere he could say the other words. And the orders were taken accordingly. Then he went to his club with the listlessness of a man who does not know what to do. What was he to do? Supposing he could make his club his home, with a bedroom somewhere to sleep in, and the Manor and his friends to fall back upon—would that do? Probably he could manage it, even on his small income, by dint of economy,—that unknown quality to which ignorance gave a certain appearance of facility. With no servant, no expensive habits, no entertainment of friends, he might be able to manage. This was what some one of his spiritual enemies whispered in Ben's ear. The next moment he jumped up and began to walk about the long vacant room,—of which at the moment he was the sole occupant,—with sudden agitation. His idle, pleasant life had come natural to him in the past; but already, though so little time had elapsed, it was no longer natural. To spend seven years of his existence planning how to save shillings and keep up appearances,—to live, he a young man at the height of his strength and powers, the

life of a genteel old maid ! That was impossible. A day-labourer would be better, he said to himself. But it is so easy to say that. He knew well enough that he could not be a day-labourer ; and what could he be ?

He had come thus far in his uncomfortable thoughts when somebody struck him familiarly on the shoulder, with an exclamation of surprise. " You here ! " said the new-comer. " You in London, when there is nobody in it, Ben Renton ! You are the last fellow I expected to see ."

" What, Hillyard ! " said Ben, though his cordiality was languid in comparison. " Back so soon ? Have you made your fortune already ? " And as he spoke it occurred to him that going to Australia must be the thing to do.

" Not much of that, " said his friend, who was very brown and very hairy, and in clothes that would not bear examination. " That is easier said than done. I have spent all I had, which comes to about the same thing ; and now I 've come back to try my luck at home,—my ill-luck, I should say ."

Then it is no good going to Australia, was the thought that passed, rapid as the light, through Ben's mind. " But I thought all sorts of people made fortunes at the diggings, or in the bush, or whatever you call it, " was what he said.

" Yes, that's how one deceives one's self, " said the adventurer. " One throws everything together in a lump, and one thinks it's all right ; whereas it's all wrong, you know. If I had been brought up to be a shepherd I might have got on in the bush ; and if I had been brought up a bricklayer's labourer I might have succeeded at the diggings ; but I was not, you see. And even in these elevated branches of industry the requirements are quite different. Let us have some dinner, Renton. It's great luck to find anyone to hob-and-nob with, especially such a fellow as you ."

" Dinner ! " said Ben amazed, looking at his watch. " Why, it's only three o'clock ."

Upon which Mr. Hillyard burst into a great laugh. " I forgot I was back in civilization, " he said ; " but I must have something to eat, whatever you call it. Yes, here I am, no better than when I went away. I believe it's all luck, after all. Some fellows get on like a house on fire. Some are thankful for bread and cheese all their lives. Some if they work themselves sick, don't get that. What's the good of making one's self miserable ?—it's all fate ."

" I suppose one must live, however, in spite of fate, " said Ben, not caring much what were the first words that came to his lips, nor with any positive meaning in what he said.

" Oh, I never was one of your tragical heroes, " said Hillyard ; " better luck next time is always my motto ; though, mind you, I'm not so sure that one is bound to live in spite of everything. I don't

see the necessity. If there's anything better to go to, why shouldn't one have a try for it? And if there isn't, what does it matter? It's a man's own responsibility. If he likes to face it, let him, and don't abuse the poor devil as if he were a pickpocket. Why, there was a fellow the other day,—and, by the way, I am taking his things home to his mother, which is a nice commission,—who squared off his fate with a bullet, by my side. I must say, I can't blame him for one. Things could not well be worse up there," said this savage philosopher, waving his hand vaguely towards the roof, "than they were down below. But this is queer sort of talk when one has just come home, and to a favourite of fortune like you."

"I am not much of a favourite of fortune just now," said Ben, with a certain longing for human sympathy. "But I'll tell you about that afterwards. Now you have come home, are you going to stay in town, or what do you mean to do?"

The question was asked not quite in good faith, for it glided vaguely across Ben's mind that the plans of a man who had long lived on his wits might suggest something for his own aid; and the answer was not more ingenuous, for it naturally occurred to Hillyard that his friend, who had the liberal hospitality of a great country-house to fall back on, and the probability of a shooting-box somewhere of his own, might intend to offer him an invitation, and so bridge over some portion of those autumn months, which were of so little use to a man who is looking for something to do.

"I shall get along, I suppose, in the old way," he said, shrugging his shoulders. "I'll serve up my Australian experiences for the papers, perhaps; or do them philosophically, with all their chances and dangers for intending emigrants, for the 'Monthly,' if I can get hold of Rathbone; or go in as a coach. I flatter myself I could give the Colonial Secretary a hint or two if I could get at him. A little tall talk hurts no one. The fact is, I don't know what I am going to be about," he added with a sigh. "Living on one's wits is hard work enough. I have kept up nothing of old days except the club, which is always a kind of haven; though, I daresay, that sounds strange to you."

"Not now," said Ben, with a contraction in his throat. "I am as poor as you, and more helpless. I rather think I am good for nothing. I suppose I shall get used to it in time, but it's not a pleasant feeling as yet." And then he told his companion all with a curious effusion, which did not surprise Hillyard more than it did himself. He had resolved to say nothing to anyone,—to lock up his troubles in his own breast, and seek no advice even from his oldest friends; and here he was unbosoming himself to the first-comer,—a man whom he had not seen for two years, and who was by no means one of his close friends. He was not aware, poor fellow, what necessity of nature it was that moved him. He justified himself afterward by the reflection

that Hillyard was, so to speak, a stranger and safe confidant,—that there was nobody in town to whom he could repeat it,—that he was a brother in misfortune, shifty and full of expedients, and might help him. But all these were after-thoughts. His real impulse was the mere instinct of nature to relieve himself from the secret pressure of a burden which was more than his unaccustomed shoulders could bear.

Hillyard was much amazed and mystified by the strange tale, and could with difficulty be brought to believe it. But he was very sympathetic and consolatory when his first incredulity was got over. "After all, it's only for seven years," he said; "that is not so very much in a life. If I knew I should come into a good estate at forty,—ay, or at fifty,—I shouldn't mind the struggle now; and you will be only a little over thirty. It's nothing,—it's absolutely nothing. You're down just now, and taken by surprise, and out of spirits with what's happened, and all that. But things will look better presently. You think it's hard to struggle and work, and never know where you're to get to-morrow's dinner," said the adventurer, with a certain light kindling in his eyes; "but sometimes it gives a wonderful relish to life. You enjoy the dinner all the better. It's more exciting than fox-hunting, or even elephant-hunting; and what does a fellow want in life but lots of excitement and movement and stir? As long," he added, after a pause, "as your strength lasts, and your mind, and your spirit, it is all very well. I don't care for tame well-being, with no risks in it. It will be nothing but fun for you."

"I don't see the fun," said Ben; but certainly the dark clouds over him were moved by the suggestion. "And I have not your knowledge or resources. Absolutely, if you'll believe me, I have not an idea what to do."

"So I should think," said Hillyard. "It would be odd if you had, plunged into it like this, without a moment's notice. Lie on your oars, my dear fellow, for a day or two, and come about with me. We may hit on something, you know; and, at all events, a few days' waiting can do you no harm."

By this time his meal had been served to him, and its arrival interrupted the talk. Ben rose and walked away to a distant window, already feeling some qualms of self-disgust at what he had done. As he stood looking out upon the flood of human beings, each absorbed in his own interests, he felt, perhaps for the first time in his life, how utterly unimportant to the world was his individual comfort, or that of any one mortal creature. He was no more to the crowd, not so much, as one drop of perfume or of bitterness would be to the pleasant Thames as it floated past his father's house,—not near so much. The sea would be a juster emblem,—that sea which swallowed up rivers and showed no increase, which threw forth its lavish atoms to the air and knew no diminution. He had been an important personage up

to this moment, even in his own opinion, though he had always known theoretically the insignificance of the individual. But he knew it now with a certainty beyond theory. When Hillyard and he were driven against the rocks, who would know the difference or be any the wiser? He who a month ago would have compassionately taken Hillyard home with him, to give him a little time to consider, was now, under the adventurer's guidance, a more hopeless adventurer than Hillyard. Ben's thoughts were not pleasant as he stood and looked out, watching the stream,—deep, no doubt, with human passion, sorrow, and perplexity, but so expressive on the surface,—which kept flowing on like water, as perennial and unbroken. His own life flitted before him like a dream as he stood looking out,—so useless, and luxurious, and free; so care-laden and overwhelmed by storms; so vague and doubtful in the future. Had he even known what would await him in the end his fate would have been less hard. Perhaps his very efforts to work out the time of his probation might secure the loss of his birthright. He might find that he worked the wrong way, that he had missed the end, even after his best exertions. A funeral procession was making its way at the moment up the busy street, to which it gave so strange a moral. And Ben turned away his head and sat down, sickened by the sight of the slow hearse with its waving plumes. To think he should have been defrauded even of his natural grief, even of the softening of his heart, which should have come over his father's grave! Was the inmate of that other coffin leaving a wrong behind him, casting a stone with his dead hands to crush his children? This, no doubt, was a harsh way of taking his trouble; but there are men to whom all crosses come harshly, and Ben Renton was one of them. Hillyard, satisfied and comfortable, with a slight flush of bodily well-being on his face, came up to him as he mused, with his glass of sherry in his hand.

"Not bad wine," he said with a sigh of comfort, "and not a bad dinner, I can tell you, to a man fresh from the backwoods. Ben, I've got a wretched thing to do, and I want you to go with me. You're out of spirits, at any rate, and it will do you no harm."

"What is it?" said Ben.

"I am going to see the mother of the poor fellow I told you of. She's a widow, living somewhere about Manchester Square. I rather think he was the only son. He made a mull of it at some of those confounded examinations, and rushed out to Australia in despair; and all went wrong with him there, and he squared it off, as I told you. I have to take her some of his things. You look more like the kind of thing, with your black clothes and your grave face, than I do. Stand by me, Ben, and I'll stand by you."

"As you please," said Ben, languidly. Already the familiarity of his new-old friend jarred on him a little. But he did not care what he did at that moment; he did not much care even what became of

him. He had nothing to do and nobody to see. It was as easy to go to Manchester Square as anywhere else, though the locality was not delectable. He suffered Hillyard to take his arm and draw him along, without much interest one way or another, not seeing how his compliance with such a trifling request could particularly affect even the hour of time which it occupied, much less his character or his life.

CHAPTER V.

THE MAGICIAN'S CAVE.

THE address was Guildford Street, Manchester Square, a narrow, dingy, very respectable street, with a good many public-houses in it, and livery stables under three or four different archways, where the genteel population round about got their "flys." The houses were tall and rather decayed, with smoky remains of the flowers which had been kept fresh and bright in the season lingering in their narrow little balconies, and no small amount of cards hung up in the windows announcing lodgings to let. It occurred to Ben as he walked listlessly through it that here was a place which would be more suitable to his fallen fortunes than the Albany; but the thought was inarticulate, and took no form. There was even a similar ticket in the ground-floor window of No. 10, where Mrs. Tracy lived, and where they were immediately admitted and conducted to the drawing-room. Ben followed his friend mechanically into the dingy room, with three long windows glimmering down to the faded carpet, commanding a view of the opposite livery stable, from which one inevitable fly was creeping slowly out under the archway. This particular vehicle was drawn by an old white horse, and it was that spot of white upon the dim foreground, and the white cotton gloves of the driver, that caught Ben's eye as he went in. He was so little interested that he scarcely noticed anything in the room. It was a disagreeable business. He had come listlessly because he had been asked. But though he had heard the story of the widow's son it had not touched him. Perhaps he was not very tender-hearted by nature; perhaps it was because he was absorbed in his own affairs. But certainly when he saw a tall figure in black rise from the small room behind and make a step forward to meet his friend, Ben woke up with a little start to realise the fact that he was thrusting himself in, without any call, to be a spectator of what might be a tragical scene. He stopped short and grew red with the embarrassment of a well-bred man suddenly placed in a position where he is one too many. And, notwithstanding Hillyard's almost nervous glance back at him and appeal for support, might have made his way out again had not his course been suddenly arrested by another figure in intense mourning, which rose from a low seat by the

vacant window. It was getting late in the afternoon, and twilight begins soon in a narrow London street; besides which the blinds were half down, the curtains hanging over the long narrow windows, and such light as there was falling on the floor. For this reason the lady at the window had been seated on a very low chair against the wall, to secure all the light she could for the work in her hand. She rose up facing Ben as the other faced his friend, rising slowly from the long sweep of black drapery which had lain coiled round her on the carpet, and suddenly-flashing upon the young man, out of the shadows, with such a face as he had never in all his life seen before. She gave him a hurried glance from head to foot, taking in every detail of his appearance, and settling in a second what manner of man he was; and then she pointed to a chair, with a soft murmur of invitation to him to seat himself. He obeyed her, not knowing why. His brain began to whirl. The long window bound with its high, narrow, smoky rail of balcony; the faded curtains hanging over and darkening the room; the pale light below upon the carpet, and the figure which sank slowly down once more with its black dress in waves on the floor; the white hands joined with some white work between them; the face against that dusky background,—was it true that he had never seen them all till that moment, or had they been there waiting for him, attending this moment all his life?

Ben Renton had been a great deal in society, and had seen beautiful women in his day; and he knew quantities of pretty girls, and had fancied himself a little in love with some of them also in his time. But something, perhaps, in the surrounding made this woman different from anything he had ever seen. She was very tall, almost as tall as himself. She was pale, with none of that adventitious charm of colour which often stands in the place of beauty. Her hair was dark, without any gleams in it. The only colour about her was in her eyes, which were blue, like a winter sky,—blue of the sweetest and purest tone, shining out under her dark hair from her pale, beautiful face, from the shadow and the darkness, like a bit of heaven itself. Ben sat down and looked at her, struck dumb, in a kind of stupor. What had he to do with this wonderfully beautiful, silent creature? Who was she? How came she here? How did it come about that he sat by her, having no right to such an acquaintance, struck dumb, like a man in a dream? He looked on stupidly, and saw the other lady sink down and cover her face with her hands as Hillyard delivered his melancholy commission. Of course it was Hillyard's duty to do so, and even to remain with them while the daughter rose noiselessly and went to her mother, bending over her, turning her beautiful pale face appealingly to the strangers, with the blue eyes full of tears. With all this strange scene his companion had a certain connection by right of his errand; but why was Ben Renton there, or what could it ever be to him?

And yet she came back to the seat by the window, and Ben, looking on, saw the tears fall upon her white hands and white work, and met in his turn the same wistful look. "Were you there too?" she said with a little sob. He was ashamed of himself to say no; but perhaps because her heart was full of her dead brother she gave no sign that she thought his presence was intrusive. She put her handkerchief to her eyes, and then she looked in his face again. "It is very, very hard for poor mamma," she said, in the softest, lowly-whispering voice. "Her only son! She was so proud of him. She always hoped he would do so well; and papa died so long ago, and we had no one else to look to. It is so hard upon mamma!"

"She has you," said Ben, wildly, feeling that some reply was looked for, and not knowing what he said.

"Ah! yes; but I am only a girl. I can love her, but what more can I do?" said this celestial creature with piteous looks. Ben's brain went round and round. He was in some enchanted place, some magician's castle. What had he to do there, listening to these soft plaints, receiving those looks which would have melted a heart of stone? In his amaze he turned half round to his friend, who alone gave him any title to be present, and his appeal was not in vain.

"I came home only this morning," said Hillyard, "and, of course, the first thing I thought of was to discharge my sad commission. My friend, Mr. Renton, came with me, as he knows better how things go on here than I do. If we could be of any use——"

Ben had got up and bowed in his embarrassment. He was overcome, he thought, with pity, certainly with another and stronger sentiment. "If there is anything I can do——?" he said eagerly. As he spoke the mother raised her head and shot him through and through with a sudden glance of her eyes,—eyes which must once have been soft like her daughter's, but which had grown keen, clear, and cold, instead of soft—with a hungry look in them. But how can you criticise a woman in such circumstances? They might be puckered up with grief; it might be the anguish of Rachel's weeping that looked through them. She said, "It is very kind," looking at them both, contrasting as it were the two together; and then with a certain abruptness, "What was it you were saying to me about some Rentons, Millieent?" she asked.

"You know, mamma," said the daughter, "Thornycroft, where I was at school, was close to the Manor, and Mary Westbury was always talking of her cousins. But perhaps this gentleman——"

"Yes; I am one of Mary Westbury's cousins," said Ben, with a throb of delight; and then he paused, thinking what else he could say to ingratiate himself. "I am the eldest;—Ben," he added, with heightened colour;—and mother and daughter both looked at him with an interest which they did not attempt to disguise.

"I have heard so often of Ben," said Miss Tracy, with a soft, little laugh. The sound of his own name so softly uttered completed the young man's bewilderment. He forgot how soon that laugh had followed on the tears, and how entirely the mother and daughter had both thrown themselves into the new subject. As for Hillyard, he sat between the two with a puzzled expression on his face. Nobody took any notice of him after the telling of his story. His friend who had the cachet of the latest civilisation on him, who was a Renton of Renton, the eldest son, was a very different person from an adventurer out of the bush. Mrs. Tracy herself came forward from the little back drawing-room where she had been sitting, and took a chair near the new object of interest. She was a handsome woman still for her age, and showed traces of having been like her daughter. She had the same clear, fine features; the same dark hair, still unchanged in colour; the same height and drooping grace of form. But her eyes, instead of being soft and dewy, were hard and keen; her lips were thin, and the muscles all tightened about them. Her hands were thin and long, and looked as if they could grasp and hold fast. "The daughter will grow like the mother, and I'd trust neither of them," Hillyard said to himself; but there might be a certain spite in it, for they showed no interest in him.

"It was very kind of you to come," said the widow, leaving it undecided whom she was addressing, but looking at Ben. "Though it is three months since I first heard of my dear boy's death, this visit brings it all back. He was my only son; and oh! what hopes are buried with him, Mr. Renton! I thought it was he that would have restored us to our natural place in the world. My Millicent was not born to live in a back street opposite livery stables. I expected everything from her brother. Man proposes, but God disposes. I cannot tell you what heaps of money I spent on him getting him ready for that examination; and yet it all came to nothing;—and now he is gone!"

"Dear mamma, we must not strive against Providence," said Millicent, putting her handkerchief lightly to her eyes.

"No, my dear," said her mother; "but if it was to be, I might have been spared all that waste of money,—when we are so ill able to afford it. Providence knows best, to be sure; but still, when it was to be, it might have been so arranged that I should have saved that. You will think it strange of me to say so; but my thought by night and by day is, what will my child do when I die?"

"Dear mamma, don't say any more," said Millicent again. "I never grudged anything that was for poor Fitzgerald's advantage; and I am sure, neither did you."

"Not if it had been for his advantage," said Mrs. Tracy, gloomily; "but you know how he broke down in his examination, poor fellow. I don't want to blame Providence,—but still I might have been spared that."

"Perhaps, Ben, we had better go," said Hillyard. "We are only intruding upon painful recollections. He was heartbroken, poor fellow. He never could forget what you had spent upon him, and that he made so little return. Ben, I think we should go."

"No; he never made any return," said Mrs. Tracy. "When one spends so much on one child without a return, one feels that one has been unjust to the rest. We are not very lively people; but I hope you will not hurry away. It was so very good of you to come. Millicent, ring for some tea. I shall be very glad to see both of you if you like to come to us sometimes of an evening. It is a very dull time of year to be in town. My poor boy has made it impossible for me to take Millicent to the sea this year; and if you are going to be in town, Mr. Renton, as you and she are almost old friends, I shall be very glad to see you; and you too, Mr. Hillyard," she added, turning half round to him. Hillyard muttered "By Jove!" to himself, under his breath. But as for Ben, so suddenly and enthusiastically received into the bosom of the family, his eyes brightened, and his face crimsoned over with pleasure.

"I shall be in town all the rest of the year," he said; "indeed, I am looking for rooms in this neighbourhood. I have something to do,—that is,—I shall want to be near Manchester Square. I shall be too glad, if you will let me, to come now and then. I must write to Mary and tell her what her relationship has gained me," said Ben, with a glow of satisfaction; while Hillyard looked on sardonic, probably because he had been asked, "too," as Ben's appendage, which was a curious reversal of affairs.

"How is dear Mary?" said Miss Tracy, "and where is she just now? I dare say going on a round of nice visits," she added, with a soft sigh; "her circumstances are so different from ours."

"She was with my mother when I left home," said Ben, his face clouding over. "She will not have many visits this year, poor girl. My mother is very fond of her, which is a great comfort to us all just now."

Millicent Tracy looked at him with her blue eyes, which seemed ready to overflow with soft tears; and Ben, who had the calm consciousness, common to great people, that everybody must "know what had happened," felt her sympathy go to his heart. But as it chanced she had not the least idea what had happened. The ladies had not had their "Times" the day on which Mr. Renton's death was announced, or else they had been interrupted by visitors, or some accident had happened to the supplement; but, anyhow, they were in ignorance of that event. It was sufficiently clear, however, that something had come upon the Renton family to call for sympathy, and sympathy accordingly shone sweetly out of Millicent's eyes. As for Mrs. Tracy, her attention was turned to more practical matters.

"The ground-floor here is to let," she said. "I can't suppose it

would be good enough for you, Mr. Renton; but still, if you had any particular reason for being in this neighbourhood,—the people of the house are honest sort of people. There is a parlour and a bedroom, quite quiet and respectable. And if we could be of any use—”

“A thousand thanks,” said Ben. He was very reluctant to leave the paradise on which he had thus suddenly stumbled, but Hillyard, the neglected one, had got up and stood waiting for him. “I shall look at them as I go down-stairs.”

And then Millicent gave him her soft hand. “I have known Mary’s cousin for years,” she said, smiling at him, with a little blush and half apology. It was as if an angel had apologised for entering a mortal household unawares. Ben went down the narrow staircase dazed and giddy, treading, not on the poor worn carpets, but on some celestial path of flowers. He looked at the low, melancholy room below clothed in black haircloth, and veiled with curtains of darkling red, and thought it a bower of bliss. Something, however, restrained him from securing this paradise while Hillyard was still with him. He whispered to the eager landlady that he would return and settle with her, and went out into the street a different being. It looked a different street, transfigured somehow. The old white horse and the rusty carriage, and the man in white cotton gloves, with his pretence at livery, stood before a house a little farther down; and it seemed to Ben an equipage for the gods. Everything was changed. The only thing that troubled him was that Hillyard took his arm once more, as if supposing he meant to be dragged back to that wretched club.

“It is easy to see I am not a swell like you,” said Hillyard. “I never pretended I was; but I had no idea it was written on my face so plainly till I read it in that old woman’s eyes.”

“She is not exactly an old woman,” said Ben, making an effort to get free of his companion’s arm.

“Oh! dear no; not at all!” said Hillyard. “But if the daughter is,—say five-and-twenty—”

“I should say eighteen,” said Ben.

“Oh, by Jove! that’s going too fast,” cried his companion; “though I can’t wonder, considering the dead set they made at you. That girl is stunning, Ben; but she thinks you’re the heir of all your father’s property, and have the Manor at your command. Mind what you’re after if you go there again. The old woman is as crafty as an old fox, and as for the young one—”

“Look here, Hillyard,” said Ben, hotly. “I am introduced to this family not by you, but by my cousin Mary. If it had been you, of course you might say what you like of your own friends; but I consider they are Mary Westbury’s friends, and I can’t have you speak of them in such a tone,—for my cousin’s sake.”

"Ah! I see," said Hillyard, ironically. "But poor Tracy was my friend, not Miss Westbury's, and I suppose I may talk of him if I like. It was the mother that drove him to it, Ben. Don't you think it's my line to speak ill of women. I've a dear little mother myself, thank God; and a little sister as sweet as a daisy,—and about as poor," the adventurer added, with a sigh; "but I hate that kind of woman. You may growl if you please. I do. After he broke down in his examination she never gave him a moment's peace. She kept writing to him for money, and upbraiding him for having none to send her, when the poor wretch could not earn bread for himself. That much I know;—and you heard how she spoke of him. If you have anything to do with these two women you will come to grief."

"If every woman who has a good-for-nothing son or brother was to be judged as harshly"—said Ben, making an effort to keep his temper. Hillyard turned round upon him with a hoarse exclamation of anger.

"He was not a good-for-nothing, by —!" he cried. "You know nothing about him. You call a man names in his grave, poor fellow, because a girl has got a pair of pretty blue eyes."

"It appears to me that our road is no longer the same," said Ben, with the superiority of temper and good manners. "I am going to my rooms, and you, I suppose, are going back to the club. I dare-say we shall meet there shortly, as we are the only men in town. Good morning, just now."

And thus they parted almost as suddenly as they met. Ben went into the Park, and composed himself with a long walk, at first with a pretence of making his way to his rooms, as he had said. He went across almost to the gate, and then he turned and made a circuit back again. He wanted cheap lodgings, that was evident,—and then!—The truth was that his mind was swept and garnished, emptied of all the traditions, and occupations, and hopes of his previous life. All had ended for him as by a sudden deluge, and the chambers stood open for the first inhabitant that had force enough to enter. Was it love that had burst in like an armed man? A certain sweet agitation took possession of his whole being. His agitation had been bitter enough in the morning, when he took the account of all those dead household gods of his, from which no comfort came; or rather it had been a kind of bitter calm,—death after a fashion. Now life had rushed back and tingled in all his veins. The world was no more a desert, but full of unknown beauty and wonder. Since his first step out of the familiar ways had taught him so much, what might not his further progress reveal? Might it not be, after all, that his deliverance from the conventional round was the opening of a new, and fresh, and glorious existence? Should not he be as free in Guildford Street, Manchester Square, as in the backwoods,—as undisturbed by impertinent observation? What were the buhl cabinets and the old

Dresden in comparison with horsehair, and mahogany, and Millicent Tracy's blue eyes up-stairs ? He tried to consider the matter calmly without reference to those eyes, and he thought he succeeded in doing so. He reminded himself with elaborate, almost judicial, calm that he had but two hundred pounds a year ; that he could not afford to live at the Albany any longer ; that cheap lodgings were necessary to him, not altogether out of reach of the world, but beyond the inspection of curious acquaintances. Under these circumstances the adaptation to all his wants of the ground-floor at No. 10 was almost miraculous. It was providential. Ben had not been in the habit of using that word as some people do ; but yet he felt that in the present remarkable circumstances the use of it was justifiable. Something beyond ordinary chance must have guided him in his ignorance to exactly the place he wanted. And the machinery employed to bring about this single result had been so elaborate and complicated. First, a suicide far off in Australia ; second, the return of an adventurer who had been sent there expressly to make Fitzgerald Tracy's acquaintance, and convey his dying message ;—a friendship which had been brought about by such means surely must count for something in a man's life.

And so by degrees Ben found himself once more approaching the street. He knocked at the door with a curious thrill and tremor. What if he should see her again ! What if she might be passing up and down after some of her celestial concerns ! He was admitted by a dismal maid of all-work, and shown in this time to the rooms which were the object of his ambition. They were very dingy little rooms. In their original and normal state they made a double room with folding doors ; but as arranged for a lodger, the folding doors had been closed and barricaded, the front half made into a sitting-room, and the back into a bed-room. The windows were closed, and in the sultry September evening the four mean walls seemed to close round the inmate and stifle him. Such a thought had half stolen across his mind when a sudden movement above thrilled him through and through. It seemed to vibrate through the house and through him. No need to ask any further question ; undoubtedly it must have been her step ; and immediately the musty air grew sweet as summer to foolish Ben.

The result was that he took the wretched little rooms for thirty shillings a week, conveying to his future landlady as he did so the meanest possible opinion of his intellectual powers. "Some fool," she replied to her husband, "as never asked no questions." He thought them very cheap, poor fellow ; he thought them highly economical, retired, respectable, and exactly what he wanted. And he was rewarded, and more than rewarded for his promptitude. Just as he had settled with the landlady a little creak on the stairs and rustling of ladies' dresses set all his pulses beating. And when he

turned sharply round there were the mother and daughter in their crape bonnets equipped for their evening walk. They were immensely surprised at the sight of Ben; more, perhaps, than could have been fully accounted for in conjunction with the fact that Miss Tracy had been seated, all this time, at the window, seeing who came and went.

"Is it possible that Mr. Renton has come to look at the rooms?" the innocent Millicent said to her mother, stopping short in the narrow little lobby.

"I have not only come to look at them, but I have taken them," Ben said, coming forward. "They suit me exactly." And there was a charming little flutter of pleasure and surprise.

"I never thought you could be in earnest," Mrs. Tracy said; "the rooms are well enough, but after what you have been accustomed to,—I was just saying to Millicent that of course it was impossible. But now I shall be quite comfortable in my mind, knowing you are there. Living in lodgings is very trying for ladies," continued the widow, lowering her voice confidentially as she went in with Ben to give a critical look round the sitting-room. "You cannot think how anxious I have been to have some one I know here, on Millicent's account, Mr. Renton. The last lodger used positively to lie in wait for my innocent child at the door."

"Confounded impudence!" said Ben. "I hope the fellow was kicked out."

"Ah, we had no such champions as you," said Mrs. Tracy with a dubious smile. "It was after my poor boy went away on that ill-fated voyage, so much against my will, Mr. Renton. Yes, he has actually taken them, Millicent," she went on, speaking louder as she turned round. "We were just going out for our little walk. It is cool now, and there are not so many people about. We neither of us feel equal to fashionable promenades, Mr. Renton. We take our little walk for health's sake in the cool of the evening. It is all the amusement my poor child has."

"Don't say so, mamma dear," said Millicent. "I am quite happy. And, oh, Mr. Renton, couldn't you have dear Mary up for a day or two to see you? Cousins may visit, may not they, mamma? It would be such a pleasure to see her again."

"Hush, child, you don't think what you are saying. Young ladies can't visit young men, you silly girl," said Mrs. Tracy. And Millicent blushed and glided round to the other side of her mother, as they all emerged into the street. Why should that mass of crape be put between them? Ben thought. But yet he had the happiness of walking to the Park with them, and catching, across Mrs. Tracy's shadow now and then, a glance of the blue eyes. They talked and amused him the whole way, leading him to the grateful shadows of Kensington Gardens, away from all chance of recognition by his

fashionable friends, even had there been any fashionable friends to recognise him. They would not permit him, however, to return with them, but dismissed him under the trees. "I am sure we are keeping you from dinner," Mrs. Tracy said, "and we could only ask you to tea. But I trust you will come to us often to tea, Mr. Renton, when you are our fellow-lodger at No. 10."

And he went back to the Albany, not miserable and misanthropical as he left it, but full of loving-kindness and charity to all mankind. He went and dressed himself in honour of "the ladies" whom he had just left, and who had already taken that name in his thoughts; and was most Christian in his treatment of Morris, promising him the best of characters and fullest explanations of why he was leaving; and he dined at his club, feeling that there was still light and comfort in the world. Hillyard was there, too, in the evening, reading all the newspapers, and yawning horribly over them. To him "the ladies" had opened no paradise. With a temper that was half angelical, notwithstanding the adventurer's rudeness in the morning, Ben was pitiful and compassionate to him in his heart.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WORKING OF THE SPELL.

FOR the next six months Ben Renton lived a strange life,—strange at least for him, who up to this time had been a young man of fashion,—répandu in the world,—with an interest in all the events, and all the gossip almost as important as events, that circulated in that curious, insincere, most limited sphere. He put his rooms into the hands of Messrs. Robins to be let, and he put his buhl and his pictures into those of the Messrs. Christie to sell,—and naturally, as it was September, no good came of either attempt for some months; and he took the ground-floor at No. 10, Guildford Street, Manchester Square. It would be difficult to describe the change which thus fell upon him. He who had gone about the Parks, about the highways and thoroughfares of the world, as in a hamlet, knowing everybody,—dining, dancing, chattering with every third person he met; now walked about the humdrum streets like a creature dropped out of the sky,—a stranger to all, seeing only strange faces around him. He whose life had been minutely regulated and mapped out, not indeed by duty, but by that routine of society which serves the same purpose, wandered aimlessly about all day, or sat in his dingy parlour over a novel, with the strangest sense of idleness and uselessness. He had not been much more industrious in the old days, when he went from the Row to his club, from his club to the Drive, with the weighty duties before him of dressing and dining, strolling down, perhaps, to the lobby of the "House," or going from box to box at an opera.

These occupations were not of very profound note among the industries of the day ; but they filled up the vacant hours with a certain system and necessity. Now he had nothing of that kind to do. He might go and stroll about the deserted Parks ; he might sit at home and work his way through one bundle of three volumes after another, and nobody would interfere with him. He had nothing to do. He had never done anything all his life, and yet he had never found it out before. One event there was still to break the monotonous existence of each dull day. Sometimes it was that he encountered Mrs. Tracy and her daughter as they went out, and was permitted to accompany them ; sometimes that he was admitted to the drawing-room up-stairs in the evening. They were very cautious in those first openings of friendship ; more cautious than they had been in its earliest beginning. Sometimes it so happened that for an entire day, or even two days, all that Ben heard of his neighbours was the sound of their steps as they crossed the floor overhead, sending vibrations through the house and through his foolish heart. But yet the meeting with them was the event of the day to him,—the only one that gave life or colour to it. It was the sole gleam of light within his range of vision, and naturally his eye fixed on that gleam. Sometimes it seemed to him that, instead of being the fallen man he was, he had come there in a voluntary abandonment of luxury and pleasantness for Millicent Tracy's sake. Though the young men of the nineteenth century are not given to romance, such a proceeding is still possible among them. And there were moments in which Ben forgot that he had any other motive for his seclusion. It was a sudden infatuation, and yet there was nothing extraordinary in it. Everything was so new to him in this changed and strange life, that any powerful influence suddenly brought into being was sure to take entire possession of the vacant space. As he sat in the gloom and quiet, with all that had hitherto occupied him gone from his grasp, and this one subtle fascination filling the air, it was scarcely wonderful that he should feel himself a pilgrim of love, giving up everything for the sake of his divinity,—keeping watch at her door, as it were, laying himself down at her feet, separating himself from the world for her service. A certain indescribable sense of her presence filled the house. The ceiling over his head thrilled under her step,—the rustle of her dress on the stair, the distant sound of her voice or her name, seemed to echo down to him in the silence. Though he saw her at the most once a day, and not always so often, he felt her perpetually, and his mind was intoxicated by this magical new sense. He lived upon it like a fool,—like a man in love, which he was, though he knew nothing of Millicent except that her eyes were heavenly eyes, and her voice as sweet as poetry. He had not cared much even for poetry hitherto, nor had much time for dreaming, and Nature now took her revenge. His youth, his extraordinary circumstances, his

unoccupied life, all conspired with this most potent of influences against him. At first there was not even any intention in his mind except that of seeing her, looking at her, filling his vacancy with the new lovely creature so suddenly placed before him; the place was empty and she had come in unawares, startling him by her smile. That was all that Ben knew about it for the moment. To win her, and marry her, and enter into another and fuller phase of life, had not yet dawned on his thoughts. She had stolen in upon him like a new atmosphere,—a delicious air in which he lived and breathed. That was all. He meant nothing by it in the first place. He was not a free agent, voluntarily and consciously approaching a woman whom he wanted to make his wife. On the contrary, he was a man suddenly, without any will or purpose of his own, launched into a new world. He might not have known that such worlds existed, so strange and new was everything to him; but the unthought-of, unknown, influence, possessed itself in a moment of the very fountains of his life.

It is not, however, to be supposed that Ben was petted or made much of by the ladies whose retirement he had thus hastened to share. At first they even appeared to keep him at arm's length with a reserve which chilled him much after their first frank reception of dear Mary Westbury's cousin. They retired within the enclosure of their grief when he became their fellow-lodger, passing him with slight salutations, with crape veils over their faces and all the adjuncts of woe, and receiving his visits, when he screwed up his courage to the point of going up-stairs, with the dignity of sorrow not yet able "to see people,"—a mode of treatment which gave Ben a pang, not only of disappointment, but of shame, at his own vain hopes, and the false interpretation he had put on their first little overtures of cordiality. "That I should have dreamed they would care to see me,—and their grief still so fresh," he muttered to himself with self-disgust. But the ladies up-stairs, in their retirement, were by no means without thoughts of their new acquaintance. They discussed him fully, though he was so little aware of it, and considered him and his ways in more detail, and with much more understanding, than characterised his brooding over theirs. It was not Mrs. Tracy's fault that he was so coldly received. It was Millicent who had barred the way against him,—Millicent herself, whose paleness and sorrowful looks had given the last touch of tender pity and interest to his admiration. They were mutually mistaken in each other, as it happened; for the mother and daughter knew no more of Ben than that he was the heir of Renton, and were so foolish in their dreams as to believe that he had, indeed, given up all the delights of his former life to live in dingy lodgings in order to be near Millicent. He had been struck with "love at first sight," they thought, and despised him a little, and were amused at the fact,

though fully determined to take advantage of it. And so strange is human nature, that the mother and daughter would have been as much disgusted and disappointed had they known the complication of motives which sent the young man into their snare, as Ben would have been had he been able to conceive the aspect in which they regarded him. He was a man of the world; and they were of the still sharper class of adventurers living on their wits; and yet they mutually believed in the single-mindedness, each of the other, with the simplicity of the peasant of romance. He thought the beautiful creature who had smiled so softly on him, and her kind mother, were interested really about himself; and they believed that he had thrown away all the daily brightness of existence for Millicent's sweet sake;—so much faith had remained at the bottom of natures so sophisticated. It was a curious conjunction of cunning and innocence.

"I am not going to make any pounce upon him," said Millicent to her mother. "I won't. You need not look so surprised. You may say what you like, but I know it is fatal to go too fast. Men don't like that sort of thing. They see through it, though you don't think they do. They are not quite such fools. You must go softly this time, or I shall not go into it at all."

"Millicent!" said her mother severely, "when you talk in this wild way, how can you expect me to know what you mean?"

"Oh, bother!" said Millicent. The profile turned half away as she spoke was so perfect, and the lips that uttered the words so soft and rose-like, that any listener less accustomed would have distrusted her ears. Mrs. Tracy only made a little gesture of disapproval. Even to herself the mother kept up her pretensions; but Millicent was a girl of her century, and made believe only when the eye of the world was upon her. "I mean to take this into my own hands," she said. "You are not so clever as you were, mamma. You are getting rather old. Let me alone to treat a man like Ben Renton. I must not throw myself at his head; he must suppose, at least, that he has had hard work to secure me."

"And I trust it will be so, Millicent," said Mrs. Tracy. "Heaven forbid that a child of mine should throw herself at any gentleman's head! It would break my heart, you know."

"Oh, yes; I know," said the daughter with a laugh; "though I never can understand what pleasure you have in pretending and keeping up your character to me. We ought to understand each other,—if any two people do understand each other in the world," the young woman added, not with much perception of the melancholy mystery she was thus skimming over, but yet vaguely conscious that even the mother beside her had secrets, and would take her own way if occasion served. Each of them shocked the other by turns, though both stood low enough in point of moral appreciation. "You would sell me, as soon as look at me, if you could," Millicent

went on. "Don't deny it, for I know it ; but Ben Renton is not in your line. It is I who must manage him."

"You will have your own way, I suppose, Millicent," said her mother ; "though what you mean by these coarse expressions I don't understand. What I feel is that the poor young fellow is very solitary. And I am a mother," Mrs. Tracy said, with a little grandeur. "I feel it might be of use to him to ask him up here. It keeps a young man respectable when ladies notice him. It keeps him out of bad hands."

Millicent looked at her mother, with a gleam of laughter in her eyes. "It is beautiful to see you, mamma," she said ; "it is as good as a sermon. But I am not so anxious about his morals. You had much better leave it in my hands."

This was how it came about that Ben was so much thrown back on himself, and dismissed from the paradise of a drawing-room where his lady was, to the close, little, dingy, black-hair-clothed purgatory on the lower floor, to wait his promotion. A word, a look, half an hour's talk now and then, raised him into the seventh heaven ; but he was always cast back again ; while, at the same time, her presence so near, the constant possibility of a meeting, the excitement of the situation, and the utter havoc of his own life, kept him suspended, he could not tell how, and banished all wholesome thoughts out of his head. The mutual pursuit and defence, the plans to see and to avoid being seen, the art of bestowing and withholding, the perpetual expectation and possibility, engrossed the two completely after a time. It engrossed the witch as much as it did the victim. When men and women have passed the age,—if the age is ever passed,—of such contests, it is difficult to realize the way in which the lives of those engaged in them become absorbed in one interest. Each meeting between the two, were it only of a minute's duration, occupied their minds as if it had been an event. To watch him out and in, to calculate what she should say to him next time, how soon she might venture the next tightening of her line, filled Millicent's thoughts as she sat over her work by the window up-stairs ; while the sound of her foot, the faintest movement over-head, the coming or going on the stairs, the rustle of the dress passing his door, occupied Ben like the most exciting drama. It was madness, yet it was nature. The mother, who was looking on with an eye merely to the result, grew impatient, and felt disposed to throw up the matter and turn her attention to other things. Mrs. Tracy was poor, and now that her son had altogether failed her, even in possibility, it was essential that her daughter should take his place. But Millicent gave no encouragement to the vague plans that fluttered through her mother's mind. She, too, was engrossed, as people are engrossed only by such a strange duel and struggle of two lives. And the six months passed with her, as with Ben, like one long, exciting, feverish day.

"You don't get a step farther on," said Mrs. Tracy; "you are just where you were, shilly-shallying,—no better than your brother. My poor Fitzgerald! if he had been spared, he might have been a help to me. Providence is very strange! He lived long enough to be a burden and take every penny we had; and then, when he might have made me some return——. And it is just the same thing, over again, with you."

"Don't speak of Fitzgerald, mamma," said Millicent. "I was fond of him, although you may not think it. You worried him till he could not bear it any longer; but you cannot get rid of me like that. I will never shoot myself. I mean to live in spite of everything,—and I mean to take my own time."

"You are an unnatural girl!" cried Mrs. Tracy with excitement. "Did not I do everything for that boy? Tutors and books, and I don't know what; and then to break down. A young man has no business to fail when his people have done so much for him. And now there is you,—I have spared no expense about you, either. You have had the best masters I could give you, and the prettiest dresses; and now you stand doing nothing. I should like to know what this young Renton means."

"It would be very easy to ask him,—and drive him away for ever," said Millicent with a heightened colour. "Mamma, I tell you, you are not so clever as you were."

"I believe you are in love with him," said the mother, with an accent of scorn;—"nothing else could account for it. That is all that is wanting to make up the story. But I tell you this will not do," she added, with an instant change of tone. "We shall have to run away if some determination is not come to. I have no money to carry on with, and there is a month's rent owing to this horrid woman; and the tradespeople and all—Millicent, there must be something done. If you are going to marry young Renton, it will be all very well; but if it is to come to nothing, as so many other things have done——"

"What would you have me do?" said Millicent, in a low tone of restrained passion. Perhaps she was angry with herself for playing so poor a rôle; but, at all events, she was disgusted with the mother who had trained her to do it, and thus kept her to the humiliating work. Mrs. Tracy was getting, as her daughter said, rather old. Her ear was not fine enough for the inflections of tone and shades of meaning which once she could have caught in a moment.

"If you will listen to me," she answered, in perfect good faith. "I will soon tell you what to do. Tell him that we are going abroad. You know how often I have spoken of going abroad. If we could only get a hundred pounds, we might go to Baden, or Homburg, or somewhere. We don't want so many dresses, being in mourning; and, with your complexion, you look very nice in mourning. I

should like to start to-morrow, for my part. You might tell him it was for my health,—that I was ordered to take the baths. And I am sure it would be quite true. After all the wear and tear I have gone through I must want baths, when you come to think of it. That ought to bring matters to a decision; and the fact is, that unless something happens, we shall have to make a change. It will be impossible to stay here."

"If it is an explanation you want," said Millicent, "it will not be difficult to bring that about,—now;" and the blood rushed to her face, and her heart began to beat. Not because she loved Ben. It was a different feeling that moved her. The object for which she had been trained, the aim of her life, had come so near to her,—in a day, in an hour, in a few minutes more, if it came to that, she might be a changed creature, with all that was wretched banished from her, and all that was good made possible. She might be, instead of a poor girl, immersed in all the shameful shifts of dishonest poverty, a rich man's bride, fearing no demand, above all tricks, with honourable plenty in her hands and about her. What a change it would be! The chance of leaping at one step from misery to wealth, from destitution to luxury, has always a more or less demoralising effect when held steadily before human eyes, and this chance had always been put foremost in those of Millicent Tracy. Nobody had ever dreamed of work for her, or honest earning. She was to win wildly the prize of wealth out of the very depths of abject poverty. Hers was not the extraordinary nobility of character which could resist the influences of such training. She was demoralized by it. Ben Renton was to her a prize in the lottery which she might win and be rich and splendid and exalted for ever,—or which she might lose in mortification and deepest downfall. It was this which flushed her cheek and made her heart beat. Not because he was a man who loved her. And yet something not mercenary, something like nature, had been in the vague intercourse between the two,—the man's advances, the woman's retreat from them and interest in them. Alas! Millicent had been wooed, and had done her best to attract and fascinate before. It was a trade to her. She lighted up into a gambler's flush of excitement now when the crisis was so near.

"Then let it come," said Mrs. Tracy; "it is time after six months of nonsense. I never knew a young man before who would be kept off and on so long, living in such a hole, out of those lovely rooms. And, by-the-bye, I wonder why he wants to sell those sweet cabinets. Getting rid of his chambers one can understand. Perhaps it is for some racing debt or something; but he must not be allowed to do it. If the family should make themselves disagreeable, Millicent, I hope I can trust to your good sense. Of course they must come round in the end."

"You may trust me, mamma," said Millicent, with a smile; and

her mother came round to her and kissed her, as she might have kissed her had she been on her way to draw the fateful ticket at a lottery.

"Now, mind you have your wits about you," Mrs. Tracy said.

It was the afternoon of a spring day, rather cold but bright, and a remnant of dusty fire, half choked with ashes, was in the grate. Millicent trembled as she sat in her favourite place by the window, chiefly with cold,—for she was very susceptible to discomfort,—and a little with excitement. When her mother left her, she let her work fall on her lap, and felt as many a woman of truer heart has felt, the very air rustling and whispering in her ears with excess of stillness, as if a hundred unseen spectators were pressing round to look on. He would come, and she would listen to him and lead him on, and the step would be taken;—the immense, unspeakable change would be made. A curious medley of thoughts was in the young woman's mind,—not all of them bad or unnatural thoughts. She would be grateful to the man who changed her life for her so completely. She would be kind to the poor,—those poor, struggling, shifting, miserable creatures upon whom already she felt herself entitled to look with pity. She would be very fine and grand, and deck her beauty with every adornment, and win admiration on every side; and yet she would be good at the same time. She would be good,—that she determined upon. And poor Fitz, if he had but been less impatient! if he had but lived to see this day! Thus she sat awaiting her lover. Poor, polluted, and yet unawakened virgin soul, knowing nothing about love!

The mother for her part put on her bonnet,—not without a keen momentary observation that the erape was beginning to be rusty,—and drew her shawl slowly round her shoulders. She had been a handsome woman in her day, and with her rusty erape still looked more imposing than many a silken fine lady. With a thrill of excitement, too, she took her way down-stairs, with more sordid thoughts than those of her child. She was thinking, also, which would be best for herself,—to live with them and share their grandeur, or to secure a certainty for herself from the bridegroom's liberality. There are women ignoble enough to act as Mrs. Tracy was doing, and still with so much divinity in them as to be willing to disappear, or die, or obliterate themselves when the daughter for whom they laboured had won her prize. But Millicent's mother had not even this virtue. She was drawing her ticket by her child's hand;—which would be most comfortable, she was thinking; and it was in the very midst of this thought that she contrived to brush past Ben, who was lingering at the door of his room, hoping to see something of his neighbours.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Renton," she said. "I did not see you were there. Not out this lovely afternoon? It is the old people who are active now; you young ones are all alike, dreaming and

building castles, I suppose. Millicent stays up-stairs all by herself, instead of coming out with me. But indeed she is dull, poor child. An old woman, even when it is her mother, is poor company for a young girl."

"I am sure she does not think so," said Ben, to whom Millicent was half divine.

"No, I am sure she does not think so," said Mrs. Tracy; "she is such a good child. But you may run up and talk to her for half an hour, and cheer her up while I am gone. There are not many gentlemen I would say as much to," she added playfully. Her playful speeches were not very successful generally, but Ben was no critic at that moment. His eyes blazed up with sudden fire. He took her hand, and would have kissed it, so much was he touched by this mark of confidence, but Mrs. Tracy knew there were holes in her glove, and drew it back.

"May I?" he said. "How good you are to me!" and had rushed up-stairs before she had time to draw breath. She turned round, looking after him, with a certain grim satisfaction on her handsome worn face.

"That is all safe," she said to herself with a little sigh of relief; and went out philosophically to let the crisis enact itself, and buy a little lobster for Millicent's supper, by way of reward to her fortunate child.

AUSTRIA IN 1869.

A MINISTER at Vienna of one of the great Powers began a conversation on Austrian politics the other day with the question : " Do you know the real wants and position of the various nationalities ? I don't." This candid confession, which reminds one of Lord Russell's famous declaration of ignorance on the Schleswig-Holstein question, may give some idea of the difficulty of obtaining accurate information on the subject which lies at the root of all Austria's troubles. It is now abundantly evident that the despotism which formerly made Austria one of the most reactionary States in Europe, was not the only, nor even the chief, cause of the unpopularity of her Government. To those who are accustomed to look upon free institutions as the sovereign remedy of all political ills, her present condition must be a sore disappointment. All the great principles of modern liberalism,—a popular legislature, responsible ministers, freedom of the press, the right of meeting, freedom of debate, secular education,—most of which are still the subject of endless conflicts between the chief continental Governments and their subjects, are embodied in the new constitution, and accepted by the ministers at Vienna as the groundwork of their policy. Yet not the blindest admirer of the present régime can deny that great and serious political discontent prevails in the country, and that the enemies of the new organisation are far more numerous than its supporters. Such discontent has been seen in other constitutional States to proceed from the predominance of class over class, the want of enlightenment among the people, or a too brief experience of political life; but in Austria its cause lies deeper. The feeling of nationality, and the claims which spring from it, are not to be satisfied by any amount of liberty or equal social rights, and they become only stronger and more pressing with the growth of education and political development.

It is too often the habit of shallow travellers who, because they have passed a few months abroad, assert a sort of prescriptive right of acquaintance with the politics of the countries they have visited, to judge of national wants by the demands of extreme parties, which generally make the most noise, and hence come most prominently before their observation. But it seldom happens, except in times of revolution, that the extreme party really represents the wishes of the majority. In every country there is a large mass of people who are indifferent to politics ; and when they are called to political action,

they nearly always follow the lead of those who are at the head of society, and who generally belong to the moderate party. A Government may, therefore, as a rule, either entirely extinguish political opposition, or make it practically harmless, by granting concessions far short of what the extreme party demands. This is especially true of Austria. Since the catastrophe of 1866 that country has been such a Babel of nationalities, each loudly and persistently clamouring for self-government, that it seemed almost impossible for anything like order to be evolved out of this extraordinary conflict of languages, races, and historical claims. It has been said by many who have witnessed the confusion that the differences between the nationalities are utterly and hopelessly irreconcilable ; that the Czech hates the German, the Ruthenian the Pole, the Shekler Serb and Rouman the Magyar, even the Tyrolian German the Viennese German ; that the establishment of a Hungarian kingdom has only added new force to the agitation for a Bohemian kingdom, a Croatian kingdom, a Polish kingdom, and other visionary schemes of a like kind ; and that with such conflicting elements in her army and her legislature, Austria must of necessity sooner or later fall to pieces. Nothing is more easy than glibly to run off a string of outlandish words, say they are the names of the Austrian nationalities, and then triumphantly ask whether it is possible for so many peoples, all with different languages, customs, and political aims, to live together under a constitutional Government. But no great political question, and the Austrian least of all, can thus be disposed of in a few sentences. The true nature and extent of Austria's present difficulties can only be ascertained by a careful consideration, not of the fanciful dreams of agitators, but of the actual necessities of each of the Austrian peoples, its political weight in the country, and the effect which compliance with its demands would produce on the general welfare of the Austrian State.

There are few national antipathies so deeply-rooted as that which exists between the Slavonians and the Germans. "So long as the world remains the world, the Pole will never be brother to the German," says a Polish proverb ; and the bitter hostility to the Germans which it exemplifies is equally strong among the Czechs and the Slavonians of the South. This hostility is not attributable so much to differences of character,—for the Austrian Germans have a good deal of the frivolity and *laissez-faire* of the Slavonians, who, moreover, differ greatly in national characteristics among themselves,—as to the tendency of the Germans to impose their language and customs on all foreigners who come under their influence. It is natural that such a tendency, which is eminently characteristic of the German nation, should both in past and present times have brought on the Slavonians of Austria much persecution and suffering. The Slavonian, unlike the German whose motto has always been "ubi

"bene, ibi patria," is above all things patriotic ; his language and institutions are among the dearest of his possessions, and he will stubbornly resist to the last any encroachment upon them. The incessant wars which resulted from such encroachments date back to a very early period of history, and in nearly all of them the aggressors were Germans. They have, with more or less success, striven to establish themselves on Slavonic ground ever since the foundation of the empire of Charlemagne. At first they simply exterminated or enslaved the inhabitants of the Slavonic countries they conquered, as in Saxony. In more civilised times, similar results were obtained by less summary means. Thus, in 1495, the Bishop of Breslau ordered that unless the Polish population of an adjoining village learnt German within the period of two years, they should be expelled the country. In all the conquered districts Slavonians were excluded by the German law from the privileges of nobles and traders, and, as related by an old Slavonian chronicle, when a Slavonian was met on the high road, he could be killed like a wild beast. So great was the animosity produced between the two races by these laws, that the evidence of a Slavonian against a German, or the reverse, was not admitted in the Saxon courts of justice. Nor was this persecution confined to the dark ages. So late as the year 1858 a Pole in Galicia was prosecuted by the authorities for having "made a political demonstration," because he had presented a German petition to the Government which was written in the Roman character instead of the Gothic.

But it is in Bohemia that the struggle between German and Slavonian has been most fierce. The Czechs say that "the German is the enemy of the Czech as the devil is the enemy of mankind;" and, indeed, few nations have had enemies so deadly and relentless. So long as Bohemia remained independent,—from 986 to 1620,—there was no European State that enjoyed more freedom or prosperity, and all her subsequent disasters date from the introduction of German colonists in the country. These settlers in a very short time made themselves obnoxious to the native population, and in 1615 it was resolved by the Diet that no German should be allowed to settle permanently in Bohemia unless he could speak Czech. The new Austrian Emperor, Ferdinand II., who was a sovereign with strong Catholic and German sympathies, now attempted to curtail the political and religious liberties which Bohemia had so long enjoyed. The Czechs rebelled, and elected to the throne of Bohemia the Palatine of the Rhine, son-in-law to our James I. ; but they were totally defeated in the battle of the White Mountain in 1620. This was the death-blow of Bohemian independence. A crowd of German officials and Jesuits was poured into the country, thousands of the Czechs were exterminated, and the rest converted to the Catholic faith by main force. In 1620, Bohemia was all Protestant ; in 1637, professedly at least, it was all Catholic. The country was so depopulated that hardly a million of

Czechs were left. The richest estates were given by the Austrian court to foreign adventurers, and the priceless stores of learning and philosophy in the libraries were burnt by the Jesuits.* Politically, the country was reduced to an Austrian province. Before the battle of the White Mountain, the Estates of Bohemia had almost more power than those of England. They not only made laws and imposed taxes, but concluded alliances, conferred titles of nobility, and elected their kings. The "new statute" given by Ferdinand to Bohemia in 1627 totally abolished this state of things. It still recognised Bohemia as a monarchy, but the succession was declared hereditary, the Estates only having the right of electing a new sovereign on the extinction of the line of Hapsburg.

The Czechs, thus totally subdued, remained in the power of the Germans and Jesuits for nearly two centuries. A liberal Emperor, Joseph II., gave them some relief by proclaiming an edict of toleration in 1781, in consequence of which many Czechs declared themselves Protestants. But the German propaganda still went on unabated. German was substituted for Latin at the University of Prague, and a law issued in 1789 decreed that no child should be apprenticed to a trade unless he had been for two years at a school where German is taught. By this time, however, the Czechs, whose race is more prolific than the German, had become so numerous that they again began to feel the desire for national life. The movement began by a revival of the Czech language and literature under the direction of Hanka, Dombrovski, and other eminent writers; but its progress was slow. Not more than forty years ago, at a meeting of Czech patriots, one of the speakers declared with truth that if the roof were then to fall on their heads there would be an end of the Czech nationality. It was not until the revolutionary movement of 1848, and the break-up of the old despotic régime which followed, that the Czechs came forward as a body to claim their ancient rights.

Bohemia is at this moment, next to Galicia, the largest province in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and the importance it derives from its size is increased by its proximity to the capital. According to German accounts its population is 4,705,000, of whom 2,900,000 are Czechs.† The country is divided into eighty administrative districts, twenty-six of which are German, twenty mixed, and thirty-four Czech. It was but natural, therefore, that in Bohemia the Czech deputies should be in the majority. So long as the Government of Austria was a despotism, the predominance of the Czech element in the Diets had no practical effect, as their power was merely nominal.

* So wholesale was this destruction, that books in the Czech language two hundred years old are now extremely rare.

† These figures do not represent the whole extent of the Czech movement, which is not confined to Bohemia, but includes Moravia and part of Silesia, comprising a total population of about four and a half millions of Czechs.

But after the war of 1859 had destroyed the prestige of Austrian statecraft, it was found necessary to seek support in public opinion, and by the constitution of October, 1860,—known as “the October diploma,”—the rights of the various nationalities were fully acknowledged, and they were given through their respective Diets a voice in the Government of the empire. This constitution, however, only existed four months. As soon as the panic produced by the defeats in Italy had subsided, the Germans again got the upper hand, and the emperor signed another constitution in February, 1861, which was framed on directly opposite principles to those of its predecessor. From a modified federalism the Government of Austria again became a centralism, with far more liberal institutions, it is true, than had existed previously, but still vesting all the political power in the German element. The February constitution lasted as many years as the October diploma had months, but it too had to yield to the preponderance of a single nationality,—this time the Hungarian—and it was suspended in September, 1865, for the purpose, as was alleged in an imperial manifesto, of enabling the various Diets to assist in framing a new organisation of the monarchy.

The Czechs now had an opportunity of officially declaring their national policy. In 1865-66 the Diets of Bohemia and Moravia demanded a federal re-organisation of the empire on the principles laid down in the “October diploma,” the introduction of the Czech language in the schools and at the university of Prague, and the coronation of the emperor as King of Bohemia. The second of these demands was at once granted, and preparations were made for the coronation by the solemn removal of the ancient crown of the Bohemian kings,—called the crown of St. Wenceslaus,—from Vienna to Prague. But though the scheme of a federalism was warmly supported by the Diets of Galicia, Croatia, Carniola, and even the German provinces of the Tyrol and Lower Austria, it was as firmly opposed by the other Diets. Most of the Germans were unwilling to give up the predominance secured to them by the February constitution, and the Hungarians persisted, as they had done since 1848, in the demand for a Ministry and Parliament of their own, and refused to recognise the lawfulness of Austrian rule on any other terms. Negotiations were entered upon by the Austrian Ministry with the Hungarian leaders in order to effect a compromise, the Slavonians being meanwhile kept quiet by various concessions to their respective nationalities, and by the hope that the then Premier, Count Belcredi, who was himself a member of the Czech nobility, would have a due regard for their wants and interests. These negotiations were suddenly broken off by the war of 1866, and when they were resumed after the defeat of Königgrätz, it became evident that the Hungarians, whose case had been considerably strengthened by the utter disorganisation of the State machine consequent on the disastrous

Bohemian campaign, would have it all their own way. The "dualism" proposed by Deak was adopted, and Baron Beust was called upon to exercise all his diplomatic skill in inducing the Germans to agree to it. In this, by concentrating the departments of war, foreign affairs, and finance under German ministers, and promising to revive the February constitution for the non-Hungarian provinces of the empire, he succeeded; but in so doing he raised a storm of opposition among the Slavonians.

When the scheme of dualism was laid before the Diets in November, 1866, all the Slavonian provinces voted against it. But the new minister, who had been brought up in the midst of absolutist traditions, was not to be turned from his purpose by popular opposition. New elections were ordered, and when it was found that the Czechs were still in the majority in the Bohemian and Moravian Diets, and that these Diets had resolved not to send any delegates to Vienna, they were again dissolved. In the elections that followed this second dissolution, the professedly-liberal Beust Ministry assisted the Government candidates by means as unscrupulous as those employed in Imperialist France. The result was that the large Czech majority in both Diets was reduced to a minority; and the Czech deputies,—among whom was the ex-premier, Count Belcredi,—after protesting against the illegality of the elections, withdrew from the Diets in a body. The German "Rump" which remained then elected delegates from among themselves for the Reichsrath, which body to this day contains no representatives of the Czech nationality. As for the other Slavonians, though they formally disapproved of the system of dualism, they did not follow the example of the Czechs, but sent their delegates to the Reichsrath.

Much abuse, especially in German newspapers, has been vented upon the Czechs for their obstinacy in this matter. They have been accused of sacrificing the interests of the monarchy to their national conceit, of indulging in extravagant dreams of independence, and of treasonable intriguing with Russia. There is some truth in these accusations, but it should not be forgotten that a similar course of action in Hungary has been crowned with success, and that no one now thinks of blaming the Hungarians for the policy they pursued. The brief sketch of Bohemian history we have given above will show that the Czechs have as good historical grounds for claiming a separate government as the Hungarians; and in the territory forming the old Bohemian kingdom, which comprised Bohemia, Moravia, and part of Silesia, there are nearly as many Czechs as there are Magyars in the kingdom of Hungary.* As for the absurd talk which one

* The population of the kingdom of Hungary is ten millions, of whom one half are Magyars. In the territories which formed the old kingdom of Bohemia, the population is about seven millions, including four and a half millions of Czechs.

hears from Germans about "Czechish barbarians," and the German race being the only one which in Bohemia has arrived at political maturity, it is mere national arrogance and bombast. The Czech literature is at least as rich as that of the Austrian Germans, who have no historian equal to Palacky, or poet equal to Kollar or Neruda. In politics the Czechs have not the keen practical spirit of the Hungarians; but they are certainly in no degree inferior to the Germans. Any one who has heard the tedious and pedantic debates in the Reichsrath, which has been aptly compared to a students' debating society, after having listened to the eloquent, manly speeches of Count Thun, Dr. Rieger, and many other Czechs in the Bohemian Diet in 1866-67, will have little hesitation in deciding which of the two assemblies has displayed most political ability. The incapacity of the German statesmen of Austria has become so notorious as to be almost a by-word. The names of Rechberg, Bach, and Schmerling will only be known in history as those of the ministers whose gross political blunders were the cause of Austria's greatest misfortunes; and the present Austrian Cabinet is chiefly composed of men who are either pedantic beaurocrats or mischievous doctrinaires. The only really able and large-minded minister at Vienna is the Chancellor, Count Beust, whom the Emperor had to invite from Dresden, there being no efficient man to be found for the post in his own capital. Nor is that strong and earnest interest in politics to be found among the Austrian Germans which exists among their brethren in the North. They are a good-natured, frivolous, pleasure-loving people, who value *gemüthlichkeit* more than political principles, and whose chief idea of government is to make things pleasant for their own nationality. The present predominance of the Germans over the Czechs in Bohemia is, in truth, not based upon political or intellectual superiority, but upon old and obsolete traditions of government.

So far as the question of abstract right is concerned, there is, therefore, no reason whatever why the Czechs should not be placed on the same political footing as the Hungarians. But in politics it is above all necessary to consider what is practically possible, and here the Czech politicians have committed a grave error. Like Kossuth and Garibaldi, they have refused to recognise the practical obstacles to the achievement of their aims, and by making "all or nothing" the motto of their policy, have condemned themselves to a fruitless inaction. The inevitable result of this must be, as in Hungary and Italy, the formation of a moderate party, which will get all it can, and make the best of what it gets. The cry for "the kingdom of St. Wenceslaus" is, after all, not so old but that it may soon be succeeded by a more practical one. In 1848 the Czechs made no such demands, and their opposition to the revolutionary ministry was solely caused by their attachment to the Imperial dynasty. Even

in 1866-67, as we have seen, they would have been satisfied with a federal reorganisation of the empire and a central Parliament at Vienna; and they only asked for a separate government when they saw that Hungary had been given one. But their position in the Bohemian territories is very different from that of the Magyars. In Hungary the Germans form but a small proportion of the very mixed population, and never attempt to oppose the dominant race; in Bohemia, where they form the majority in the towns, they are in constant conflict with the Czechs, and they are naturally supported in this struggle of races by the Germans in the other provinces of the empire. Thus the 4,500,000 Czechs have against them not only the 1,500,000 Germans in Bohemia, but the 6,500,000 Germans in other parts of Austria as well,—which, it will be acknowledged, are rather long odds, especially as in the non-Hungarian territories nearly all the political power is in German hands. Nor is this all. In Lower Silesia,—one of the provinces of the old Bohemian kingdom,—the majority of the inhabitants are Poles, who have no desire to be united with the Czechs; and among the Czechs themselves there are strong religious dissensions, arising from the Hussite doctrines of the national party, which have given great offence to the ultramontane clergy and nobility.

Such being the situation, the Czech patriots caught in 1867 at the desperate resource of seeking aid from Russia, who had for some time been actively pursuing Panslavist intrigues in Bohemia and other provinces of the empire. We showed, in an article published in this magazine in April, 1868,* that this step was only taken under an impulse of pique, which was not likely to be lasting, and the event has fulfilled our previsions. The Panslavist demonstrations which gave so much alarm to the friends of Austria last year have ceased, and all the principal Czech newspapers,—such as the “Koruna,” “Narodni Nowiny,” and even the Radical “Correspondance Tchèque” of Berlin,—now strongly disclaim any wish for a political union with Russia, and declare that the policy, literature, and institutions of the Czechs must be strictly guarded against the introduction of Russian influences. This threat of an appeal to Russia is, in truth, only a bugbear invented by the Czech politicians to frighten the Austrian Government into compliance with their demands. In spite of their professed sympathies for the Russian nation, they know well enough that a union with Russia can only mean subjection to the despotic authority of the Czar, and consequently the absolute renunciation of those hopes of administrative independence which alone drive them into opposition to the Cabinet of Vienna; and they must know equally well that Russia would not assist them against Austria merely to create an independent Bohemian kingdom. Moreover, on every side but the east, the Czechs are

* “The Panslavist Revival in Eastern Europe.”

surrounded by Germans. The northern districts of Bohemia are more attracted to the Saxons than the Czechs, and its western and southern districts have a strong sympathy for Bavaria; and it is no secret that the absorption into the united Germany of the future of the Bohemian wedge in its territory is one of the favourite plans of the German unionists. Thus, to prevent their being swallowed up in the rising tide of Russian or German nationality, it is pre-eminently the interest of the Czechs to maintain their connection with Austria.

These considerations have not escaped the attention of the more thoughtful among the Czech statesmen. So far back as 1843 Count Leo Thun said, in his well-known work "On the Slavonianism of the Czechs,"—"The union of the Slavonians under one government is an impossibility. As soon as the nationality of one of the Slavonian peoples is attacked by another people of the same race, all feelings of brotherhood between them cease, and they look on each other as foreigners. The union of all the Slavonians under the rule of Russia would be the ruin of the twenty-five millions of Slavonians who do not now belong to that empire." This opinion of the leader of the Czech Conservatives appears to be becoming general among the moderate politicians of all parties, and even Drs. Rieger and Palatzky, who were formerly enthusiastic Panslavists, and now stand at the head of the Liberals, have adopted a conciliatory tone towards the Government which no longer excludes the prospect of a compromise. There is, no doubt, still an extreme party, which declares that it will accept nothing short of "the crown of St. Wenceslaus;" but it is more noisy than influential, and the men of standing in the country are gradually abandoning it.

Next to the Czech difficulty, the question which just now gives most trouble to Austrian statesmen is the Galician. In numbers the Galicians exceed the Czechs by about half a million, and they enjoy the further advantage of having their country almost entirely to themselves, the German element in Galicia being quite insignificant. Their political power, however, is much impaired by an internal difficulty, which has been so distorted by Russian writers on the one hand, and Germans on the other, that an accurate account of it is seldom obtainable from the ordinary sources of information. That difficulty is what is called "the Ruthenian question." The Ruthenians, who inhabit the eastern half of Galicia, are the same people as form the bulk of the population in the Polish provinces of Russia known as Podolia, Volhynia, and the Ukraine; while the western half of the country is inhabited by Poles of the same stock as the inhabitants of Warsaw. Between the Poles, and a party among the Ruthenians known as "the St. George party," there has since 1846 been a strong antagonism; the Poles pursuing with characteristic ardour the patriotic object of securing the greatest possible development of their national institutions and literature, while "the St. George" party have no less

persistently agitated for the separation of Ruthenian and Polish interests, the establishment of a Ruthenian Diet in Eastern Galicia, and the adoption in that district of Ruthenian as the language of the schools and courts of justice. In order to understand correctly the meaning and scope of these pretensions, it will be necessary to recall some of the principal events of Ruthenian history. The long stretch of country extending from the Baltic to the plains of Moldavia now known as Lithuania and Ruthenia, had a Norman Conquest in the ninth century as England had in the eleventh. The conquerors, led by Rurik, furnished sovereigns to the Slavonian peoples they had subdued, and thus Eastern Galicia (then called the Duchy of Halicz) passed under the rule of a Norman dynasty. In the thirteenth century the Tartars invaded Halicz, and made its sovereigns their tributaries; but shortly after, the succession having passed by marriage to the hands of Casimir, King of Poland, he declared war against his Tartar suzerain. The war lasted two years, at the end of which time, having delivered the country from the Tartars, Casimir united Halicz to Poland. This was in 1342, and the province has belonged to Poland ever since. While under the Polish rule, the Ruthenians in Galicia were in a similar position to that of the Scots of the present day towards England; the union of the two peoples was consolidated by frequent marriages and identity of national interests and sympathies, and the Ruthenians were allowed to retain their own language, institutions, and laws. The union was indeed so close that two of the elected kings of Poland were Ruthenians,—Michael Korybut and John Sobieski, the liberator of Vienna; and even the Churches of the two countries,—the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic,—were amalgamated, with the consent of the Ruthenians, into a new ecclesiastical body called the "United-Greek," to which they still belong. As for the Ruthenian language, it was at no time used by the educated classes: the literature as well as the history of Ruthenia is Polish.

In 1846, after the Ruthenians had thus lived together with the Poles as one nation for five centuries, Count Stadion, the Austrian Governor of Galicia, first started the idea of a Ruthenian nationality. The Government at Vienna, alarmed at the Polish movement in the then republic of Cracow, and acting in accordance with its old motto, "Divide ut impere," eagerly adopted Connt Stadion's suggestion. A Ruthenian society, named after the cathedral of St. George, was formed at Lemberg, and every attempt was made to persuade the Ruthenians that they were a persecuted nation suffering under Polish oppression. The trick was so evident that it long remained a fruitful subject of ridicule with the wits of Vienna. One comic paper appeared in 1847 with the following words instead of the date: "Anniversary of the discovery of the Ruthenians." Another, when the Ruthenian deputies came to the Reichsrath in 1861, expressed surprise at their

having grown to such a size in fifteen years. But the Austrian Government soon found reason to regret its duplicity. The "discovery of the Ruthenians" in Galicia brought down upon the House of Hapsburg a much more formidable enemy than the Poles,—the Russians. The transformation, by a happy stroke of policy, of the name of the Duchy of Muscovy into that of "Empire of all the Russias," in an official decree issued under Peter the Great, has produced an effect both upon Europe and Russia itself which shows what importance sometimes belongs in politics to a name. Two of the largest provinces of Poland were at that time called "White Russia" and "Black Russia;" and it seemed natural both to Europe and the Muscovites, now that they had been christened Russians, that those provinces, whose history, language, and institutions were totally different from those of the State established at Moscow, should be united with the dominions of the Czar. This, indeed, has been one of the principal excuses for the partition of Poland, and has been accepted as valid by serious English writers to this day.* But besides White and Black Russia, there was a "Red" Russia in Poland, formed out of the late Duchy of Halicz, and constituting what is now known as Galicia. To this province, being one "of the Russias," the Czars have as good a claim as to White and Black Russia; but as the partition could not be effected without the complicity of Austria, it was necessary to give her a share in the spoils, and Galicia thus passed into the possession of the House of Hapsburg. The Russian Government, however, has since the partition always shown a hankering after this rich and extensive province, which moreover would give it the almost inaccessible range of the Carpathians as a frontier on the side of Austria, instead of the easily-fordable Vistula, as at present; and the "discovery of the Ruthenians" was too good an opportunity of carrying out its designs to be missed. Its agents were soon to be found in every Ruthenian village; it established a Ruthenian organ ("Slovo," the Word) at Lemberg, the Galician capital; and it spent large sums in the publication of Ruthenian books, printed in Russian instead of the usual Latin characters. The object of this propaganda was not only to revive the fiction of an empire of "All the Russias," but to teach the Ruthenians that they were originally the same people as the Russians, and ought to aspire to reunion with them. But notwithstanding the energy with which the Russian agents worked, and the extraordinary apathy of the Austrian Government, they obtained very little success except among the clergy and a few scientific theorists. It was found to be impossible to persuade the Ruthenian peasants that a language which they could not understand was the same as their own, or that a country which they had

* See the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1863. A complete and accurate statement of the question will be found in the *Westminster Review* for July of the same year.

always been accustomed to call Polish was really Russian.* As for the Ruthenian nobility and the educated classes in general, they are among the bitterest opponents of Russia, having taken a prominent part in all the Polish insurrections, and repeatedly shared the sufferings as well as the glories of their Polish countrymen.

Though the Ruthenian peasants are, on the whole, unwilling to secede from Austria, the efforts made by official agents from Vienna and St. Petersburg to secure their support have filled them with an overwhelming sense of their importance as a nationality; and this feeling has been skilfully taken advantage of by their leaders, most of whom are priests devoted to Russia, in organising a strong opposition against the Polish element. It must not be supposed, however, that there is any analogy between the Czech opposition in Bohemia and the Ruthenian movement in Galicia. The Ruthenians are in a minority; they have no national literature or historical traditions; and they are opposed to a people of the same race as themselves, with whom they have lived in amity for centuries. The difficulty, as will be seen, is of a far more tractable kind than that in Bohemia. The most radical of the Ruthenian leaders ask for nothing more than an administrative separation of Galicia into a Polish and a Ruthenian division, each with its own diet, language, and local institutions. This demand would be fair and practical, if the Ruthenian party had anything like a governing element. But, as we have shown, all the Ruthenian nobility, gentry, and professional men are, in language and political sentiment, strongly Polish. There is not a single member of the party either in the diet or the Reichsrath who is not either a priest or a peasant; and not one of them, even when they were in high favour with the Government, ever filled any important office in the State. The effect of the establishment of a Ruthenian diet and government at Lemberg would be simply to drive its ablest and wealthiest inhabitants to Cracow, and abandon eastern Galicia to Russian propagandism.

The objects of the Ruthenian party being thus hostile not only to the policy of the Polish majority in their own country, but to the general interests of the Austrian State, their opposition to the Government can in no case have any practical effect. Nor can they be said to have any "sentimental" grievance, for their Church possesses the same privileges as the Polish Church, and they have the free use of their language in the diet, the courts of justice, and the schools. The real difficulty of the Galician question lies in the dissatisfaction, not of the Ruthenians, but of the Poles. When a central Parliament was first established in Vienna in 1861, the Poles, like the Hungarians and the other non-German nationalities, protested against the attempts of

* The Ruthenian peasants call the territory east of the Dnieper the country of the Muscovites (*Moskovshchyna*); and when they cross the river, in returning to their own country, they say they are going to Poland (*do Polshchы*).

Herr von Schmerling and his friends to destroy all traces of local self-government, and introduce a uniform system of administration in the various territories of the empire; but they did not refuse to send representatives to the Reichsrath, confining their resistance to the Government strictly within the limits of constitutional opposition. To this policy they have firmly adhered ever since, notwithstanding the example of the Hungarians and the Czechs, who not only refused to recognise the Reichsrath as a lawful parliament, but maintained an attitude of complete inaction. In 1867, during the debate on the proposed "fundamental laws," the Polish members introduced several amendments with the object of giving more extensive powers in local administration to the Galician diet. These amendments, however, were all rejected by the German majority, and the Polish members consequently voted against the new constitution when it was brought before the House. In the following August, the constitution having been laid before the Galician diet, that assembly addressed a motion to the Reichsrath, comprising a list of the reforms in the constitution which the diet considered to be absolutely necessary in order to make the new régime applicable to Galicia. Among these reforms, which still constitute the Polish programme, are the appointment of a separate minister for Galicia, the placing of the local taxation in the hands of the diet, and the establishment of a local supreme court of justice. The motion was submitted, in the session which has just closed, to a committee of the Reichsrath, which has reported against it; but the Government, alarmed at the prospect of alienating the largest province in the empire by rejecting all its demands, has postponed the discussion of the motion in the House till the autumn, on the pretext that so important a matter ought not to be disposed of at the end of a session.

In estimating the strength of the opposition against the present régime it is necessary also to take into account the Southern Slavonians, who, though too scattered and uncivilised to form a compact national unity, like Bohemia or Galicia, are equally hostile to the centralising tendencies of the ministry, and invariably vote with the Poles in the Reichsrath. This people, called Slovenes, belong to the same branch of the great Slavonic stock as the Croatians, and they naturally look with envy on the wide autonomy which has been given in Hungary to their more fortunate countrymen. They are strongest in Carniola, where there are barely 5,000 Germans; in Styria they are outvoted by the Germans; and in Istria and Trieste by the Italians. In all their population is about 1,200,000.

We have now passed in review all the chief elements of discontent which at this moment exist in the empire. Disregarding those religious differences which now exist more or less in every civilised State, and are really not more formidable in Austria than elsewhere, we see the opponents arrayed against each other in two distinct

camps, one composed of Slavonians, the other of Germans. In numbers the Slavonians are decidedly superior to their adversaries, being twelve millions to seven. On the other hand, the Germans are immensely predominant in the Vienna Cabinet,* and have a large majority in the Reichsrath. The central administration is entirely in their hands, and their influence at court is paramount. In spite of the large difference of numbers, the forces might, perhaps, be considered as pretty evenly balanced, if a third disturbing element did not enter into the calculation,—namely, the new position acquired since the events of 1866 by Hungary.

The long struggle between the Hungarians and the Germans has only been suspended, not closed, by the establishment of the present dualism; for the causes which originally produced it still exist, and must in the nature of things bring about its renewal. The German passion for dominion which found its expression in the abortive systems of Bach and Schmerling had to yield to the necessities of the position in 1866, but the concessions were made grudgingly, and were only half-concessions after all. On the other hand, Hungary, more prosperous both politically and financially than the western half of the empire, feels her strength, and is evidently determined to have her own way in the general policy of the State as well as in that of her own government. But her interests and sympathies are very different from those of the German rulers of Austria proper. The Hungarians look for their national development to the east; the Germans to the west, where are their countrymen, whose feelings and wishes they share, and to whom they hope to be united some day. It would be idle to expect anything like a permanent union of two such irreconcilable elements, especially on the present dualist basis. This ingenious combination, which will remain, if nothing else, a monument of the legal ability of Deak and the diplomatic tact of Count Beust, was admirably calculated to spare the susceptibilities of all the parties concerned, and thus to bring about a temporary arrangement; but as a political piece of work it is a mere sham, which must fall to pieces the first time a really practical test is applied to it. The principal feature of the dualism is what is called the system of delegations. The legislatures at Pesth and Vienna each elect a "delegation" of sixty members, who meet yearly to deliberate on the "common affairs" of the State, that is to say, war, foreign affairs, and finance. So far the delegations have worked together in tolerable harmony, the majority in both legislatures having hitherto been the same as originally sanctioned the reconciliation between the two halves of the empire, and no new subject of contention having arisen since. But if any change should take place in the character of the Hungarian or German majority, or some fresh incident, such as a foreign complication, should arise, each delegation

* All the ministers are Germans, except the Polish Count Pototzki, who has the comparatively unimportant portfolio of Agriculture.

would probably insist on a different policy to that of the other. In that event, as the delegations are not allowed to communicate, except by writing, and as, even supposing that they would be sufficiently conciliatory to come to an agreement, the majority in either legislature can make their resolutions inoperative by refusing to grant the supplies necessary to carry them out, matters would inevitably come to a deadlock. The result of this year's elections in Hungary already shows a considerable change in the distribution of parties in the Chamber at Pesth. The Government majority, which in the last diet disposed of 300 votes out of 437, has been reduced to 270, and its losses have occurred chiefly in the Magyar districts, where alone it can rely on permanent support, the representatives of the other nationalities having special interests which, even when they belong nominally to the Government party, they are obliged to defend in all cases. The same may be said of the clerical and ultra-conservative members, as although they give a general support to the ministry, they invariably vote against it when it brings forward a liberal measure. Count Andrassy is said to have remarked that the old majority was so large as to be unwieldy, and that it will be more manageable now that it has lost its unhealthy corpulence; but however true this may be from the Hungarian point of view, the defeat of so many dualists in the elections bodes ill for the continuance of the harmony between the two delegations. It is certain that the great mass of the Hungarians, including the Slavonic and other nationalities, are becoming more and more penetrated with the desire of separating their Government entirely from that of Austria proper, and the able statesmen who helped to carry out the dualist system are not so obstinately attached to it but that they will yield to the public feeling if it should once strongly and unmistakably declare itself. The new Hungarian military organisation will no doubt do much to precipitate this result. A Hungarian army, commanded by Hungarian officers, and stationed in Hungarian territory, will make the common administration of military affairs a mere form, and practically secure to the Hungarians the power of framing an independent policy abroad as well as at home.

Another very important addition to the power of Hungary, which places her at a great advantage over the German Government at Vienna, is the support she receives from the Slavonic nationalities. Until the year 1838 the Magyars lived in perfect harmony with the Slavonians, the latter enjoying the free use of their own language and institutions. In that year, however, a system of oppression similar to that pursued in Austria proper began to be exercised on them, and it continued more or less up to the establishment of the dualism. But now that the Hungarians have almost entirely recovered their independence, they treat their Slavonian countrymen with consideration as in former times. Croatia, which is the most important of the

Slavonian provinces of Hungary, now has a separate local government, supreme court of justice, and financial administration, and a Croat minister to represent its interests at Pesth; and the Slovaks and Ruthenians of the north, like the Servians of the east, have ceased to oppose the Magyar rule, having been guaranteed the unfettered development of their respective nationalities. The best proof of the wisdom of this policy, as compared with the unyielding centralism of Austria proper, is to be found in the attitude of the non-Hungarian deputies in the Parliament at Pesth. Slavonians, Germans, and Roumans are there to be found in the Government majority, as in our Parliament Scotch, Welsh, and Irish members are among the supporters of Mr. Gladstone; while at Vienna the Slavonian deputies either abstain from voting altogether, or, when they do vote, invariably take the side of the opposition.

It will now be seen that the real source of Austria's present troubles is not so much the mutual hostility of rival nationalities, as "the frenzy of centralisation," as Mr. Lowe calls it, which characterises the rule of the German element. Centralisation has always been the dominant principle of German government in the empire, whether it took the form of Bach absolutism or Schmerling liberalism; and the disasters it has already brought on Austria seem in no way to have cured the Germans of this radical fault in their policy. The present constitution is, in all essential points, the same as that of Schmerling, with the clauses relating to Hungary left out. The same unjust electoral laws, which give the Germans, though in a minority in the country, a majority in the Reichsrath; the same subjection of small matters of local administration to the authority of the officials at Vienna; the same disregard of those national peculiarities which demand the creation of special institutions in the Slavonic provinces, are to be found in the new "fundamental laws" as existed in Schmerling's "February patent"—a measure which has done more to excite the hatred of the Slavonians for the Germans than centuries of humiliation and oppression. We see the result in the absence from the Reichsrath of any representative of the Czechs, who constitute a fourth of the total population of Austria proper; and the Poles, who with the Ruthenians make another fourth, have been so provoked at the refusal of the autonomy promised by Count Beust in order to induce them to accept the new order of things, that they also threaten to withdraw from the Reichsrath. Should this threat be carried out, it will be simply impossible to carry on the Government with any regard for constitutional forms, and the first European convulsion would then almost inevitably shake to pieces a State so divided against itself.

This being the case, the question arises; Why preserve the German dominion, seeing that after so many costly experiments, it has proved itself utterly impracticable? That the present Vienna ministry of second-

rate lawyers and professors cannot long remain in office must by this time be evident both to the Emperor and his clear-sighted Chancellor, Count Beust; but what is wanted is not only a change of ministry, but a radical change of system. It is useless in these days of popular government to attempt to stem the natural development of nations, and no liberal constitutions or diplomatic arts that it is possible to devise can prevent the German provinces of Austria from some day forming part of a united Germany. This is a truth which Count Beust, who still bias for Austrian influence in the Fatherland, seems unable or unwilling to perceive. Austrian liberalism may, indeed, be held up by German patriots as an example to Prussia, but that it should induce them to rally round the Hapsburgs as the future regenerators of Germany is a wild dream which could hardly have come into the head of the acute Austrian Chancellor, if he were not blinded by his old enmity to Bismarck and the traditions of the Middle-State policy which he directed as Premier in Saxony. Doubtless, the Germans are still very useful to Austria as officials, administrators, and legislators, and they occupy large and wealthy provinces which it would be an act of suicidal folly to abandon. But they have totally failed in Austria as rulers, and since 1866 their ultimate secession from the empire has become only a question of time. And yet not only is their predominance artificially maintained in the ministry and the Reichsrath, but new measures,—such as the recent Education Bill,—are constantly being introduced to shape the local institutions of the various nationalities according to a uniform German standard. Such a policy cannot be continued without endangering the very existence of Austria. The Germans must learn to moderate their pretensions to dominion and give up their centralising hobby. No statesman will ever succeed in the difficult task of saving the empire from internal dissolution unless he abandons, once for all, that pernicious system of governing for the exclusive benefit of a minority which has brought it to the verge of ruin. Austria's interests, population, and language are pre-eminently Slavonian, not German; and the Hungarian half of the empire owes its present prosperity and union to the recognition of this important fact. Whether the Government at Vienna will also accept that fact as the guide of its policy, is the question on which the future of Austria depends.

AD ROSAM.

“Mitte sectari Rosa quo locorum
Sera moretur.”—HOR.

I.

I HAD a vacant dwelling—
A tenement that I,
As nought can serve the telling,
Decline to specify ;—
Enough 'twas neither haunted,
Entailed, nor out of date ;
I put up “ Tenant wanted,”
And left the rest to Fate.

II.

Then, Rose, you passed the window,—
I see you passing yet,—
Ah, what could I within do,
When, Rose, our glances met !
Who could have seen, and waited ?
Who could have looked, and stayed ?
My fort capitulated
Before a siege was made.

III.

I heard the summons spoken
That all hear—king and clown :
You stopped—the ice was broken ;
You smiled—the bill was down.
How blind we are ! It never
Occurred to me to seek
If you had come for ever,
Or only for a week.

IV.

The words your voice neglected,
Seemed written in your eyes ;
The thought your heart protected,
Your cheek told, missal-wise ;—

I read the rubrie plainly
As any Expert could ;
In short, we dreamed,—insanely,
As only lovers should.

v.

I broke my Psyche, Röslein,—
A gem that Taste assures,—
Because her lips and nose-line
Were parodies—to yours ;
And you, without vexation,
May certainly confess
Some graceful approbation,
Designed à mon adresse.

vi.

You liked me then, Carina,—
You liked me then, I think ;
For your sake gall had been a
Mere tonic-cup to drink ;
For your sake, bonds were trivial,
The rack, a tour-de-force ;
And banishment, convivial,—
You coming too, of course.

vii.

Then, Rose, a word in jest meant
Would throw you in a state
No apropos investment
Could quite alleviate ;
Beyond a Paris troussseau
You prized my smile, I know,
I, yours—ah, more than Rousseau
The lip of d'Houdetot.

viii.

Then, Rose,—But why pursue it ?
When Fate begins to frown
Best write the final “fuit,”
And gulp the physic down.
And yet,—and yet, that only,
The song should end with this :—
You left me, left me lonely,
Rosa mutabilis !

IX.

Left me—with Time for Mentor,—
 A dreary tête-à-tête,—
 To pen my “Last Lament,” or
 Extemporize to Fate,
 In blankest verse disclosing
 My bitterness of mind,—
 Which is, I learn, composing
 In cases of the kind.

X.

No, Rose; though you refuse me,
 Culture the pang prevents;
 “I am not made”—excuse me—
 “Of so slight elements;”
 I leave to common lovers
 The hemlock or the hood,
 My rarer soul recovers
 In dreams of public good.

XI.

The Roses of this nation—
 Or so I understand,
 By careful computation,—
 Exceed the gross demand;
 And, therefore, in civility
 To those that can’t be matched,
 No man of sensibility,
 Should linger unattached.

XII.

So, without further fashion—
 A modern Curtius—
 Plunging, from pure compassion,
 To aid the overplus,
 I sit down, sad—not daunted,
 And, in my weeds, begin
 A new card—“Tenant wanted;
 Particulars within.”

A. D.

NATURALISATION AND ALLEGIANCE.

ACCORDING to the Census of the United States, in 1860, one-sixth part of the whole population consisted of foreigners. In New York, half of the inhabitants are foreigners and half natives. In Paris, nearly five per cent. of the population are foreigners ; and in London there are more than 40,000 of them, as many again being spread over the whole country. But no one judges an influx of foreigners to be a national misfortune. Most of them are useful members of society and active labourers in the great workshops of the world. Blind indeed is that country which shuts out the skill, enterprise, and capital which foreigners are apt to introduce. Open the door as wide as possible. Let your shores be as a magnet to the industrious of all countries. Abolish every restriction. Have done with prejudice and jealousy. Let your legislation be liberal and free. That is the right policy. And we are acting upon it to a very great extent. Only it is a necessary consequence of this great freedom, and of the movement which it promotes, that difficulties often arise on questions of Naturalisation and Allegiance. Under what circumstances natural allegiance to the mother-country should be considered superseded by the new bonds created with another ; whether an absolute decree of divorce should be necessary to dissolve the tie which binds us to our father-land, and an express Act of Naturalisation required in order to establish the new alliance with the State in which we live,—these are questions which now task the mind of legislators and politicians in this and other countries.

As it is, the jurisprudence of different States exhibits the greatest confusion. We do not anticipate any early realization of a perfect cosmopolitanism, where individual nationality should merge into the grander idea of the citizenship of the world. But there is no reason why the laws of different States should be discordant and conflicting in these particulars, and it is far from creditable to the scientific character and high state of civilization of the present age, that there should be instances where it is actually difficult to know to what country one really belongs. Let a few specimens of this conflict suffice. The British law at present holds that the son, and even grandson, of a British subject, born in a foreign State, is a British subject, and, therefore, entitled to British protection. But many countries, like our own, exact allegiance from all persons born within the State ; and, in all such cases, the person sustains a

double nationality. If born in France, he will be a Frenchman by the French laws, and an Englishman by the English. Let war arise between the two countries, and if he be subject to recruiting or to the conscription, he must necessarily be a traitor to France or to England.

An Englishwoman marries a Frenchman, and goes to reside in France. By the French laws she follows the status of her husband, and she becomes a Frenchwoman, but England still holds her to remain a British subject, and so she is the citizen of both countries. But let a Frenchwoman marry a British subject; she does not become British because she is not born here, and yet she is no longer French because she has lost her nationality by marrying a British subject. She is discarded by both countries. Nor are these conflicts and difficulties simply theoretical and sentimental. To the individual and the State they are followed by real inconvenience and injury. To the individual in matters of social and commercial relations, in matters of matrimony, will, and inheritance, it makes all the difference to what nation he really owes allegiance. To the State, the conflict is often the cause of great annoyance. And it is much to be regretted where the Government is compelled to enter into quarrels, and it may be into wars, in defence of personal rights for causes often the most trivial.

We well remember the famous case of Don Pacifico, for whose extortionate demands we made a reprisal against the Greek Government. A few years ago, the gallant, but now we fear extinct, Republic of Paraguay imprisoned a certain Canstadt, who was implicated in a crime against the President; but the British Government demanded his liberation, on the ground that he was a British subject, although he was born in Belgium, and claimed British nationality simply from the fact that he was the son of one who had become a British subject by having served as surgeon in a British man-of-war. Sometimes it is very difficult to maintain our assumed rights. The Argentine Republic would not allow that the sons and grandsons of British subjects, born in the country, should be exempt from military service. During the Venetian insurrection in 1848, British subjects who by an uninterrupted residence of ten years had acquired the rights of citizenship, were not allowed to claim exemption from a forced loan. In China it has become necessary, in order to protect persons of Chinese descent who claim to be British subjects, to provide that they shall discard the Chinese costume and adopt some other dress or costume whereby they may readily be distinguished from the native population. But the greatest trouble we have had, on this score, has been with the United States of America. They will not allow or admit that full two-thirds of their people, consisting of emigrants and their descendants, shall be still subjects of the several States of Europe, and owe those States service, so as to be liable to be summoned to fight for governments with which they have no con-

nexion, and against the very States with which their fortunes are indissolubly united.

In the very Declaration of Independence, one of the counts of the American colonists against this country was, that "he,—the King of Great Britain,—has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalisation of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriation of land." After the Treaty of Peace of 1783 cases arose in which the status of persons owing allegiance respectively to the British and United States governments continued to be discussed. Not long after,—during the war of the French Revolution,—great dissatisfaction was created by the exercise of the claims of the British Crown to the allegiance of its subjects, by impressing British seamen from on board American vessels. The unfortunate affair of the "Chesapeake," fired at by a British ship to enforce a demand to search it for deserters, proved to be more serious than was intended. At the time of the disturbances in Ireland in 1848, the question of disputed allegiance was raised in consequence of some American or returned emigrant having been arrested in this country. During the last civil war in America, many difficulties arose from numbers of persons registering themselves as British subjects in order to claim exemption from the militia. And when, lately, we were compelled to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, the United States complained because we arrested some Fenians who had been naturalised in America. The trial, however, of John Warren, one of the leaders of the Jacmel expedition, before Chief Baron Pigott and Mr. Justice Keogh, at Dublin, on the 30th August, 1867, brought matters to a crisis. In that case counsel applied to the court for a mixed jury, on the plea that, although born in Ireland, Warren was an alien, having been formally naturalised in the United States. But the application was refused, the Chief Baron having ruled that, according to the law of England,—a law which has been administered without any variation of doubt from the earliest time,—"he who once is under the allegiance of the English sovereign remains so for ever." Immediately after this the House of Representatives of the United States pressed the matter for legislation, and the result was the passing of an Act asserting to the fullest extent the right of expatriation, declaring naturalised citizens of the United States entitled to the same protection as native-born citizens, and providing that whenever it shall be made known to the President that any citizen of the United States has been unjustly deprived of his liberty by or under the authority of any foreign government, it shall be the duty of the President forthwith to demand of that government the reason of such an imprisonment; and if it appears to be wrongful, and in violation of the rights of American citizenship, the President shall forthwith demand the release of such citizen, and if

the release so demanded is unreasonably delayed or refused, it shall be the duty of the President to use such means, not amounting to acts of war, as he may think necessary and proper to obtain or effectuate such release; and all the facts and proceedings relative thereto shall, as soon as practicable, be communicated by the President to Congress.

Diplomatic correspondence thereafter ensued between the United States Government and her Majesty's Government on the subject, and the consequence was the issue of the Royal Commission, consisting of the Earl of Clarendon, President, Mr. Cardwell, Sir Robert Phillimore, Sir George Bramwell, Sir John Karslake, Sir Travers Twiss, Sir Roundell Palmer, Mr. Forster, and Mr. Vernon Harcourt; with instructions to inquire first into the legal condition of natural-born subjects who may depart from or reside beyond the realm in foreign countries; and, secondly, into the legal condition of persons being aliens entering into or residing within the realm, or becoming naturalised as subjects of the Crown. The Commissioners did not examine witnesses, but they collated all the facts and the laws of different countries on the subject, and published a report which, though deficient in many points, is well calculated to place the law on a just and equitable footing.

One principle of English law we must be prepared to renounce, and that is the claim from all British subjects of an indefeasible and perpetual allegiance to the British Crown. Founded, partly on a kind of compact of feudal origin from the relation between lord and vassal, and partly on a debt of gratitude which the subject owes to the Crown for protection, the doctrine is, that natural allegiance cannot be forfeited, cancelled, or altered by any change of time, place, or circumstance, nor by anything but the united concurrence of the legislature. But the old ideas of feudal supremacy are scarcely tenable now, and it would be impossible to bind a man to this country against his will. In truth, an implied assent to the extinction of the mutual obligation between a government and its subject may be held to be given by the law which permits emigration, and by every facility we offer for the conveyance of British subjects to foreign land. But however it be, it is out of the question to place the narrow views of local allegiance against the broader principles of public and international law. "Every man is born free," said Vattel; "and the son of a citizen, when he comes to the years of discretion, may examine whether it be convenient for him to join the society for which he was destined by his birth." "It is a right inherent in all free people to have the liberty of removal if they think proper," is the dicta of Burlamagin; and still more to the point "is the opinion of Rayneval." "Man, whose subsistence depends upon his industry, ought naturally to seek happiness wherever he can find it. Want and misery make the law for him in this respect. If his native country offers him resources, it is

his nature to be attached to it. If it does not, by what right I will add, with what motive shall we seek to arrest or to punish him? May he not say, 'Give me and my family assurance of support, or let me seek it elsewhere.' The law of nature, which is that of self-preservation, will be to eternity stronger than all the maxims and calculations which polities can present. We are wrong to say that this man injures his country by carrying his industry abroad. He may justly reply that his industry is his own, and that he has a right to carry it where it can furnish him subsistence." The doctrine of indefeasible allegiance is neither reasonable, convenient, or expedient. It is at variance with those principles on which the rights and duties of a subject should be deemed to rest; it conflicts with that freedom of action which is now recognised as most conducive to the general good as well as to individual happiness and prosperity. It is inconsistent with the practice of a State which allows to the subject absolute freedom of emigration. But more than that, we hold that it is most inexpedient that British law should maintain, either in theory or practice, any obligation which it cannot enforce, and ought not to enforce, if it could. The law of foreign countries generally recognises the fact of expatriation, and provides for the consequences. According to the French law, a person who has been naturalised abroad ceases to be a French subject. By the Prussian law, the quality of a Prussian subject is lost by ten years' residence in a foreign country, and by the marriage of a female Prussian subject with a foreigner. The Bavarian law declares that expatriation ensues by naturalisation in a foreign country, without previous authority from the king, by emigration, and by the marriage of a Bavarian woman with an alien. The Italian law is the same, and so the laws of other States. And we see no reason why the English law should not be put on the same footing. We are glad, therefore, that the Royal Commissioners are clear on this point, and with their recommendations we fully concur. They are as follows:—

1. That any British subject, who, being resident in a foreign country, shall be naturalised therein, and shall undertake according to its laws the duty of allegiance to the foreign State, as a subject or citizen thereof, should, upon such naturalisation, cease to be a British subject.
2. That the principle of this rule shall apply to a woman who, being a British subject, shall become by marriage with an alien the subject or citizen of a foreign State.
3. That the wife of a British subject who shall become naturalised abroad, and his children, if under the age of twenty-one years at the date of his naturalisation, shall likewise cease to be British subjects from that date; though that rule should not include a wife or child who has not emigrated to the country of naturalisation, nor should it operate unless, according to the local law, the naturalisation of the

husband or father has naturalised also the wife or child. Lest, however, the power of expatriation should be abused, the Royal Commissioners are careful in adding that in all such cases, naturalisation in a foreign country, though operating from the time of its completion as an extinguishment of the original citizenship, shall not carry with it a discharge from responsibility for acts done before the new allegiance was acquired.

But is it only by a formal Act of naturalisation in a foreign State that a change of nationality should be established? How many are there who have lived for years in this country, and who have practically become Englishmen and yet have never become naturalised. Is not a lengthened residence a sufficient evidence of a change of nationality? On this point the Commissioners said that they considered the question, whether the acquisition of a foreign domicile, or a certain length of residence abroad, should divest a person of British nationality, but that they were not able to satisfy themselves, that either continued residence or domicile could be practically adopted as a rule to determine the allegiance of the subject, having regard to the difficulties which attend the definition of domicile and proof of the fact, and also to the great diversity of circumstances under which men reside in foreign countries. We admit that questions of domicile, depending as they do on the intention of the parties, not less than on the fact of residence, are often most perplexing; but we see no difficulty in establishing the rule, that a continuous residence abroad for ten years and upwards should operate as a renunciation of native nationality. Time is necessarily a great ingredient in constituting such a change or renunciation of nationality, and in most cases it is unavoidably conclusive. A special purpose may lead a man to a country, where it shall detain him the whole of his life. Allowing that a person going abroad on a visit, or for trading, or other purposes, may not mean at first to change his nationality, still the effect is the same when, from any circumstance, he remains abroad a sufficiently lengthened period, all the while participating in the benefits and acquiring the rights of a citizen of another country. As we have seen, by the laws of several countries, the quality of a native subject is lost by living ten years in a foreign country; and, to our mind, a similar regulation ought to be adopted here also. We quite agree, with the Royal Commissioners, that it is expedient that the new regulations regarding change of nationality should be applied to British subjects already naturalised, or residents, in foreign countries, and that a certain period, not less than two years, should be allowed, within which any person so circumstanced may declare his desire to remain a British subject. But we must leave points of detail, and come to another question, viz., who is included within the character of a natural-born British subject.

The law at present declares as British subjects all persons of

British parentage born abroad, down, we suppose, to the latest generations. Is there anything so preposterous as to make a French youth who has never seen England, and who knows not a word of English, an Englishman, simply because his great grandfather was a British subject? The Royal Commissioners propose that the transmission of British nationality in families settled abroad shall henceforth be limited to the first generation, and more specifically, that every child born out of the dominion of the Crown, whose father at the time of the birth was a British subject, shall be regarded by British law, as by birth, a British subject, provided the father were born within the dominion of the Crown, but not otherwise. But that any such person, who according to the law of a foreign country is a subject or citizen of that country, and who has never exercised or claimed any right or privilege as a British subject, should, in the administration of British criminal law, be treated as a subject of the country in which he was born. In other words, we will still claim the son of a British subject born abroad as a British subject, but we will not undertake to protect him against any misdeeds he may commit in the country in which he is born and where he lives. But what will be the use to him of his British nationality under such circumstances? Such an anomalous position is certain to entail troubles. Let the same rules which have been suggested as regarded the nationality of the parents regulate the nationality of the child, and the difficulty, if any there be, will be greatly diminished. Let a child of a British father, born in a foreign country within ten years of his residence therein, be accounted British; and a child of a British father, born after he resided for ten years out of the dominion of the Crown, or after he has become naturalised in a foreign country, be considered an alien. As regards persons of foreign parentage, born within the dominion of the Crown, the Royal Commissioners recommended that children of foreign parents born on British territory should be treated as British subjects, unless they disclaim that character by being specially registered as aliens. It is suggested that provision should be made for enabling children born within the dominion of the Crown, of alien fathers, to be registered as aliens, and that children so registered shall be thenceforward regarded as aliens. Nay more, that the child who was not so registered on his birth, or during his minority, by his father or guardian, shall be permitted to register himself as an alien at any time before he has exercised or claimed any right or privilege as a British subject. But that if the father, being an alien when the child was born, become during the child's minority naturalised as a British subject, the child, though registered as an alien, should follow the condition of the father. These rules seem rather complicated, and it might suffice were we to declare that a child of a foreign father, born in this country within ten years of his father's residence in it, should be

considered as an alien; but that a child born to such parent after that period of residence in the dominion of the Crown shall be deemed a British subject.

If, however, we have to admit, that under certain circumstances, a British subject may become an alien, and that aliens in this country may even transmit to their children the disabilities of alienage, it is the more important that these disabilities should not produce substantial injury. The present law on aliens is of comparatively recent date, the principal Act in force having been passed in 1844. Up to that time the law was decidedly hostile to them. They were debarred from the possession of real property, and some descriptions of personal property; they could not take houses on lease for years without danger of forfeiture; they could not hold British registered shipping, nor shares therein; they could not claim any commercial benefit by virtue of treaties with other States, and they were excluded from all places of trust. Restrictions like these against persons who bring to this country their capital and industry ought never to have had a place in the Statute Book; and when a reform was made in 1844, they ought simply to have been abolished. Unfortunately, whilst by the 7 and 8 Vict. c. 66, the position of aliens was somewhat improved, the mistake was committed of re-enacting that aliens shall not be allowed to possess real property for more than twenty-one years, unless naturalised, and that even the benefits of naturalisation should so far be restricted by declaring that a certificate of naturalisation shall not confer the right of becoming a member of Her Majesty's Council, or of either House of Parliament, or of taking any office, civil or military, or of accepting any grant of land from the Crown. And what is the consequence? Practically, indeed, the restriction against the holding of real property is quite disregarded, numbers of aliens possessing mills, houses, lands, &c. Yet now and then such restriction proves a real hardship. A case in point was communicated to the Royal Commissioners. A native of Stuttgart, the proprietor of a steel pen manufactory in Birmingham, giving employment to a large number of persons, had a factory of freehold tenure. Though one of his partners was a naturalised British subject, he himself was not, having been refused naturalisation from the circumstance of his not continuously residing in England, and consequently a portion of the factory was forfeited to the Crown. Had he known at first that there was the slightest chance of his having any difficulty with reference to such property, would he have ever started his manufacture in England? Certainly not, for it was indispensable that he should erect special and extensive buildings. As it is, factories are being erected at Boulogne, or other French, Belgian, or Dutch towns, to avoid such forfeitures, but in this way British industry loses the investment of foreign capital in the country. In France, a foreigner domiciled in the country enjoys all the civil rights of

French subjects. In other States it is the same ; the right of an alien to possess land having become a general law, not only in Europe, but throughout the world. Under such circumstances, the restriction here is untenable, and we are glad to find that the Royal Commissioners recommend that the present disabilities of alienage in respect of the holding of land should be abolished altogether.

But let this disability be removed, and where are the benefits of naturalisation ? They will be solely of a political character, and we are glad to find that the Royal Commissioners recommend that,—subject to a certain length of residence in the United Kingdom, or of service under the British Crown, to be proved to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State,—a person naturalised shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of a natural-born British subject within the United Kingdom, without any exception whatever. When Mr. Hutt introduced his Bill on the Law of Aliens, in 1840, his intention was that naturalisation should give to aliens the full rights of British-born subjects ; but Sir James Graham, speaking on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, took objection to that, and said that it was undesirable to repeal a provision in the Act of Settlement, which he considered most wholesome. "He was convinced," he said, "that it was the general feeling of the country ; it might be a vulgar prejudice, but still he confessed that he partook of it, and he believed that the people of the United Kingdom felt that it was fitting that the members of their legislature should be native-born subjects, and persons capable of taking into consideration their habits, their feelings, and their associations. He was for British subjects being the legislators for Britain." Hence it is that the restriction was still kept up ; but the 7 and 8 Vict. c. 66 having abolished the provision of a former statute, which prescribed that no Naturalisation Act should be passed without such restriction, it has been since held that the legislature is at liberty to pass special Acts, giving to an alien every right as a natural-born subject, and consequently several Acts to that effect were recently passed.

In this respect the legislation of foreign countries has been hitherto more liberal than that of England. In the United States of America, seven years' citizenship are sufficient as a qualification for a representative to Congress, and nine years' citizenship for that of a Senator. In France, by the constitution of 22 Frimaire, An VIII., an alien, after ten years' residence, was enabled to sit in the legislative assemblies ; and in 1808 the period was reduced to one year, as regards those who conferred great services to the State. In 1814 the king, considering it necessary that none should sit in the Chambers but persons "whose birth was a guarantee of their affection to the sovereign and the laws of the State," reserved to himself the privilege of granting La Grande Naturalisation, and stipulated that such letters should be verified by the two Chambers. During the Revolution, in

1848, a decree was passed facilitating naturalisation, but in 1849 it was declared that a naturalised alien should not enjoy the right of eligibility in the National Assembly except by virtue of a special law. Since, however, the electoral law of 1852 declared that every elector is eligible, it was natural to argue that a naturalised foreigner, who has undoubtedly the right to vote, possesses also the right of being eligible. And, therefore, quite as recently as 1863, a M. Samuel Welles de Lavalette, born at Boston, domiciled in France, and duly naturalised, was allowed, without any special law, to sit in the Corps Legislatif as fulfilling all the conditions of nationality, age, and capacity. In the same manner, Prince Poniatowski, a Pole, naturalised in 1854, was soon after admitted senator, though he neither received the letters of La Grande Naturalisation required by the law of 1814, or was so authorised by the special law prescribed in 1849. The chances that a foreign-born subject may be elected to represent any constituency in the British Parliament must be very small; but should such a case arise, the electors are the best judges of the character and qualifications of the candidate for election. If fear be entertained that the British Parliament be made the arena for foreign politics, or that political refugees, who have no stake in this country, may too readily be elected, the conditions suggested by the Royal Commissioners, that such alien-born shall have resided ten years or more in this country, and that the granting of the full naturalisation should be left to the discretion of the Secretary of State, are sufficient to remove the possibility of any danger.

The State most anxious to bring the naturalisation laws into some accord is the United States of America; and for some time past she has entered into negotiations with this and other countries for the conclusion of treaties on the subject. The treaty with the North German Confederation provides that the citizens of the Confederation who shall have become naturalised citizens of the United States, and shall have resided uninterruptedly within the United States five years, shall be held by the North German Confederation to be American citizens, and shall be so treated. Further, that a naturalised citizen of the one party, on his return to the territory of the other party, shall remain liable to trial and punishment for an action punishable by the laws of his original country, and committed before. And that if a German, naturalised in America, renews his residence in North Germany without the intent to return to America, he shall be held to have renounced his naturalisation in the United States. As yet only three such treaties were concluded by the United States,—with the North German Confederation, Bavaria, and Mexico. As for England, nothing can be done till the law of the country is first amended. But the question has been practically solved by the Royal Commissioners, and we trust that Her Majesty's Government may speedily introduce a satisfactory measure on the subject.

BENEFITS.

PHILIP HENSLowe who, late in the sixteenth century, was proprietor of the old Rose Theatre, which stood a little west of the foot of London Bridge, at Bankside, combined with his managerial duties the occupation of pawnbroker, and was employed moreover as a kind of commission-agent or middle-man between dramatic authors and actors. It probably seemed as natural to the manager to engage in these different employments as to require his players to "double" or "treble" parts in plays possessed of an unusually long list of dramatis personæ. He had married Agnes Woodward, a widow, whose daughter, Joan, became the first wife of Edward Alleyn, the actor, founder of Dulwich College. Henslowe had been the servant of Mrs. Woodward, and by his union with her he acquired considerable property. Forthwith he constituted himself "a banker of the poor,"—to use the modern euphonious synonym for pawnbroker,—and advanced money to all needing it who were able to deposit with him plate, rings, jewels, wearing apparel, or other chattels of value. The playwrights of the time constantly obtained loans from him, not always that he might secure their compositions for his theatre, but often to relieve their immediate wants; and it is plain that he constantly availed himself of their necessitous condition to effect bargains with them very advantageous to his own interests. Robert Daborne, the dramatist, for instance, appears to have been particularly impecunious, and he was moreover afflicted with a pending lawsuit; the sums he obtained for his plays from the manager were therefore very disproportionate and uncertain. His letters to Henslowe are urgent in solicitations for payment on account of work in hand; he was often obliged to send his manuscripts piecemeal to the manager, and on one occasion supplied a rough draft of the last scene of a play, in order to obtain a few shillings in advance. The amounts paid for new plays at this time were very low. Before 1600 Henslowe never gave more than £8 for a play, but after that date there was a considerable rise in prices. In 1613 Daborne received £20 for his tragedy of "Machiavell and the Devil." In the same year, however, for another play, "The Bellman of London," he was content to take £12 and "the overplus of the second day." He had demanded £20 in the first instance, but being in great stress for money, had reduced his terms, beseeching Henslowe "to forsake him not in his extremity." Daborne's letters of entreaty indeed expose his poverty in a most

pathetic manner, while occasionally they betray amusingly his vanity as an author. In one of his appeals to the manager, he writes: "I did think I deserved as much money as Mr. Massinger;" but this estimation of himself and his writings has not been confirmed by later ages.

The "overplus of the second day" was probably, as a rule, not very considerable, seeing that a payment of £20 down was regarded as a higher rate of remuneration than £12 and "the overplus," whatever it might produce, in addition. Daborne's needs, however, may have induced him to prize unduly "the bird in the hand." Still his brother authors held similar views on the subject. They too disliked the overplus system, while the managers as resolutely favoured it. So that, apart from the consideration that poverty clings to certainty because it cannot afford speculation, and that to the literary character especially a present payment of a specified sum is always more precious than possible undefined profits in the future, we may conclude that the overplus system generally told to the advantage of the managers. In the end the labourers had to yield to the capitalists; —indeed could make little stand against them. Authors have never manifested much faculty for harmonious combination, and a literary strike was no more conceivable then than now. In time a chance of the overplus became hardly separable from the method of paying dramatists. It was thought perhaps that better works would be produced by the writers, who were made in some sort dependent for profit upon the success of their plays, and partners in the ventures of the managers. In such wise the loss sustained from the condemnation of a play at its first representation would not fall solely upon the manager; the author would at least be a fellow-sufferer. Gradually the chance of the overplus was deferred from the second to the third performance. The system, no doubt, varied according to the position of the dramatist, who, if he were a successful writer, could make his own terms, so far as the selection of the overplus night was concerned. Sir John Denham, in the prologue to his tragedy, "The Sophy," acted at Blackfriars about 1642, speaks of the second or third day's overplus as belonging to the poet:—

"Gentlemen, if you dislike the play,
Pray make no words on't, till the second day
Or third be passed."

After the Restoration it became a settled practice that what was then called "the author's night," should be the third performance of his play; and the dramatist in time received further profit from subsequent representations. "In Dryden's time," writes Dr. Johnson, explaining that with all his diligence in play-writing the poet could not greatly improve his fortune,* "the drama was very far from that universal approbation which it has now obtained. The playhouse

* He had entered into a contract to furnish four plays in each year.

was abhorred by the Puritans, and avoided by those who desired the character of seriousness or decency. A grave lawyer would have debased his dignity, and a young trader would have impaired his credit by appearing in those mansions of dissolute licentiousness. The profits of the theatre, when so many classes of the people were deducted from the audience, were not great; and the poet had for a long time but a single night. The first that had two nights was Southern; and the first that had three was Rowe. There was, indeed, in those days arts of improving a poet's profit, which Dryden forbore to practise, but a play seldom produced him more than a hundred pounds by the accumulated gain of the third night, the dedication, and the copy."

These "arts of improving a poet's profit," consisted in the canvassing his friends and patrons, distributing tickets, and soliciting favour in all quarters. By his address in these matters, Southern's tragedy, "The Spartan Dame," produced him £500; indeed, he is said to have profited more by his writings for the stage than any of his contemporaries. Malone states that Addison was the first to abandon the undignified custom of appealing personally to the public for support. But it has been pointed out that this is an error. Addison gave the profits of "Cato" to the managers, and was not required therefore to appeal on his own behalf to the public. Goldsmith's "Good-Natured Man," it may be noted, was played ten consecutive nights, and the third, sixth, and ninth performances were advertised as "appropriated to the author." These three nights produced him £400, and he received £100 more from Griffin, the publisher, for the publication of the play,—the entire receipts being immediately, with characteristic promptness, spent in the purchase of the lease of his chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple, and in handsome furniture, consisting of "Wilton carpets, blue moreen mahogany sofas, blue moreen curtains, chairs corresponding, chimney glasses, Pembroke and card tables, and tasteful book-shelves." According to Malone, one hundred guineas remained for many years, dating from 1726, the standard price paid by the publishers for a new play.

In addition to these "authors' nights," performances were occasionally given for the benefit of an author suffering from adverse circumstances. Thus in 1733, a performance was organised at the Haymarket Theatre for the benefit of Mr. Dennis, the critic and dramatist. The "Provoked Husband" was represented, and Pope so far laid aside his resentment against his old antagonist, as to supply a prologue for the occasion. Nevertheless, it was noticed that the poet had not been able to resist the temptation of covertly sneering at the superannuated author, and certain of the lines in the prologue were found susceptible of a satirical application. Happily, poor Dennis, protected by his vanity or the decay of his intelligence, perceived nothing of this. Indeed, the poor old critic survived the benefit but twenty days, dying

in the seventy-seventh year of his age. Other benefit performances on behalf of distressed men of letters, or their families, have frequently been given, even in quite recent times, but these are not to be confounded with the "authors' nights," as they were originally understood. "Authors' nights," strictly so called, have disappeared of late years. Modern dramatists are content to make private arrangements in regard to their works with the managers, and do not now publicly advance their personal claims upon the general consideration. They may profit by an "overplus," or be paid by the length of "run" of their plays, or may sell them outright at once for a stipulated sum. The public have no knowledge of, and no concern in the conditions of their method of transacting business. But from the old overplus system of the Elizabethan stage resulted those special performances called benefits, still known to the modern play-goer, though now connected in his mind almost altogether with actors, and in no degree with authors. Nevertheless, it was for authors that benefits were originally instituted, in opposition, as we have seen, to their wishes, and solely to suit the convenience and forward the interests of managers, such as Mr. Henslowe.

Certainly in Shakspeare's time the actors knew nothing of benefits. They obtained the best price they could for their services, and the risk of profit or loss upon the performance was wholly the affair of the manager. Indeed, it was long after the time when the chance of an overplus had become systematized as a means of paying authors, that it occurred to any one that actors might also be remunerated in a similar way. In olden days the actor's profession was not favourably regarded by the general public; his social position was particularly insecure; he was looked upon as of close kin to the rogue and the vagabond, and with degrading possibilities in connection with the stocks and the whipping-post never wholly severed from his professional career. An Elizabethan player presuming to submit his personal claims and merits to the consideration of the audience, with a view to his own individual profit, apart from the general company of which he was a member and the manager whom he served, would probably have been deemed guilty of a most unpardonable impertinence. Gradually, however, the status of the actor improved; people began to concede that he was not necessarily or invariably a mountebank, and that certain of the qualities and dignities of an art might attach now and then to his achievements. The famous Mrs. Barry was, according to Cibber, "the first person whose merit was distinguished by the indulgence of having an annual benefit play, which was granted to her alone," he proceeds, "if I mistake not, first in King James II.'s time, and which became not common to others until the division of the company, after the death of King William's Queen Mary." However, in the preceding reign, in the year 1681, it appears by an agreement made between Davenant, Betterton, and others, that

Charles Hart and Edward Kynaston were to be paid "five shillings a-piece for every day there shall be any tragedies or comedies or other representations at the Duke's Theatre, in Salisbury Court, or wherever the company shall act during the respective lives of the said Charles Hart and Edward Kynaston, excepting the days the young men or young women play for their own profit only." Benefits would certainly seem to be here referred to, unless we are to understand the performances to be of a commonwealth kind, carried on by the players at their own risk, and independently of the managers. Still, to King James's admiring patronage of Mrs. Barry, the benefit system, as it is at present known to us, has been generally ascribed, and clearly the monarch's memory deserves to be cherished on this account by our players. He can ill afford to forego the smallest claim to esteem, and undoubtedly he entertained a friendly regard for the stage and its professors. Indeed, the Stuarts generally were well disposed towards the arts, and a decidedly play-going family.

For some years, however, actors' benefits did not extend beyond the case of Mrs. Barry. But in 1695 the patentees of the theatres were so unfortunately situated that they could not satisfy the claims of their actors, and were compelled to pay them "half in good words and half in ready money." Under these circumstances certain of the players compounded for the arrears of salary due to them by taking the risk of benefit performances. After a season or two these benefits were found to be so advantageous to the actors that they were expressly stipulated for in the agreements with the managers. On the other hand, the managers, jealous of the advantages secured in this wise by the players, took care to charge very fully for the expenses of the house, which were of course deducted from the gross receipts of the benefit night, and further sought to levy a percentage upon the profits obtained by the actors. In 1702 the ordinary charge for house expenses, on the occasion of a benefit at Drury Lane, was about £34. In Garrick's time the charge rose to £64, and was afterwards advanced considerably. Still the actors had special sources of profit. Their admirers and patrons were not content to pay merely the ordinary prices of admission, but bought their tickets at advanced rates, and often sent presents of money in addition. Thus Betterton,—whose salary, by-the-bye, was only £4 per week,—took a benefit in 1709, when he received £76 for two-thirds of the receipts upon the ordinary scale,—one-third being deducted by the manager for expenses,—and a further sum of £450 for the extra payments and presents of his friends. The boxes and pit were "laid together," as it was called, and half-a-guinea was charged for admission. "One lady gave him ten guineas, some two, and most one guinea. Further, he delivered tickets for more persons than the boxes, pit, and stage could hold, and it was thought that he cleared £450 at least over and above the £76." Certainly the great

actor enjoyed on this occasion of his benefit what is popularly known as "a bumper."

The system of actors' benefits having thus become thoroughly established, was soon extended and made applicable to other purposes,—for the most part of a charitable kind. Thus in 1711 a benefit performance was given in aid of Mrs. Betterton, the widow of the late famous tragedian, who had herself been an actress, but had for some time ceased to appear on the stage owing to age and other infirmities. The "Tatler," after an account of Betterton's funeral, describes feelingly the situation of his widow:—"The mention I have here made of Mr. Betterton, for whom I had, as long as I have known anything, a very great esteem and gratitude, for the pleasure he gave me, can do him no good; but it may possibly be of service to the unhappy woman he has left behind him, to have it known that this great tragedian was never in a scene half so moving as the circumstances of his affairs created at his departure. His wife, after a cohabitation of forty years in the strictest amity, has long pined away with a sense of his decay, as well in his person as in his little fortune; and in proportion to that she has herself decayed both in her health and reason. Her husband's death, added to her age and infirmities, would certainly have determined her life, but that the greatness of her distress has been her relief by her present deprivation of her senses. This absence of her reason is her best defence against age, sorrow, poverty, and sickness."* Indeed, Steele constantly testifies his fondness for the theatre and kindly feeling towards the players, by calling attention to the benefit performances, and bespeaking the public favour for them, adding much curious mention and humorous criticism of the comedians who were especially the objects of his admiration,—Pinkethman, Bullock, Underhill, Dogget, and others.

Other benefits, however, less urgently laid claim to the goodwill of the public. At the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, in the year 1726, a performance was announced "for the benefit of an author whose play is deferred till next season." How far the efforts of this anonymous gentleman to raise money upon a sort of contingent reversion of literary distinction were encouraged by the play-goers, or whether his play ever really saw the light of the stage lamps, can hardly now be discovered. By-and-by performances are given on behalf of objects wholly unconnected with players or playwrights. In 1742 a representation was advertised, "For the entertainment of the Grand Master of the Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons—for the benefit of a brother who has had great misfortunes." A season or two later there was a benefit at Drury Lane "for a gentleman under misfortunes," when Othello was played by an anonymous actor, afterwards to be known to fame

* "The Tatler," No. 167, May 4, 1710.

as Mr. Samuel Foote, and who, it may be mentioned, though his performance was a failure, was the first Othello to wear Moorish robes and discard the military uniform, which had been regarded as the proper costume for the character. In subsequent years benefits were given "for the sufferers by a late fire;" on behalf of the soldiers who had fought against the Pretender in the '45; for "Mrs. Elizabeth Forster, the grand-daughter of Milton, and his only surviving descendant,"* when "Comus" was performed, and a new prologue, written by Dr. Johnson, was spoken by Garrick; for "the Lying-in Hospital in Brownlow Street;" while in the success of the production of Dr. Young's tragedy of "The Brothers," played at Drury Lane in 1753, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was directly concerned,—the author having announced that the profits would be given in aid of that charity. Nevertheless, the receipts disappointed expectation; whereupon the author generously, out of his own resources, made up the sum to £1,000. A special epilogue was written for the occasion by Mallet at Garrick's request; but this was so coarsely worded, and so broadly delivered by Mrs. Clive, that Dr. Young took offence, and would not suffer the lines to be printed with his play.

Among the curiosities of benefits may be recorded a performance that took place at Drury Lane in 1744 on behalf of Dr. Clancy, the author of one or two plays, who published his memoirs in Dublin in 1750. Dr. Clancy was blind, and the play-bill was headed with the line from Milton, "The day returns, but not to me returns." The play was "Œdipus," and the part of Tiresias, the blind prophet, was undertaken by Dr. Clancy. The advertisements expressed a hope that "as this will be the first instance of any person labouring under so heavy a deprivation performing on the stage, the novelty as well as the unhappiness of his case will engage the favour and protection of a British audience." The performance, which must certainly have been of a painful kind, attracted a very numerous audience; and the fact may be regarded as proof that an appetite for what is now designated "the sensational," was not wholly unknown to the playgoers of the last century. It does not appear that Dr. Clancy's representation of the blind prophet was repeated, nor is it stated that as a histrionic effort it was particularly distinguished. It was enough perhaps that the part was played by a man who was really blind, instead of by one merely simulating blindness. Ultimately Dr. Clancy's case moved the pity of George II., and he was awarded during his life a pension of £40 a-year from the privy purse.

Other authors have from time to time appeared on the stage, to

* The lady is said to have been so little acquainted with diversion or gaiety, that she did not know what was intended when a benefit was offered her. Praiseworthy efforts were made in her interest, but the performance only produced £130.

speak prologues, or to sustain complete characters;—for instance, Tom Dursey, Otway, Farquhar, Savage, Murphy, and to jump to later days, Sheridan Knowles. Their appearances, however, cannot be simply connected with benefits. In many cases they, no doubt, contemplated the adoption of the stage as a profession, though, as a rule, it must be said success was denied them in such respect. They played on their benefit nights, of course, but their performances were not limited to those occasions.

It is not to be supposed that a benefit could be taken by an actor, or, at an earlier date, by an author, without his incurring much trouble in regard to preliminary arrangements. The mere issue of a list of entertainments, however attractive, was by no means sufficient. He was required to call at the houses of his patrons and friends personally to solicit their support on the occasion and to pay his respects to them. Any failure of attention on his part in this matter he was bound to make the subject of public explanation and apology. It must be remembered that the playgoers of a century ago were rather a family than a people. They were limited in number, returned to the theatre night after night, naturally demanding that constant change of programme which so distinguished the old stage and has been so completely omitted from modern theatrical arrangements,—and were almost personally known to the actors. This, of course, only refers to the visitors to the pit and boxes; the galleries were always presumed to be occupied by footmen and apprentices, and persons of no consideration whatever, while stalls were not yet in existence. Strangers from the country were few;—those from foreign parts fewer still. The theatre was regarded, as it were, from a household point of view; was in some sort supplementary to a man's home, and he therefore considered himself entitled to be heard and to take a personal interest in regard to its concerns and proceedings. Necessarily this feeling diminished as London grew in size, and the audience increased in numbers; and finally became impossible. An actor knew at last his admirers only in the mass; while they lost inevitably all individual and private interest in his success. But long after the London players had ceased to make calls and to solicit patronage for their benefits, the practice still obtained in the provinces and could on no account be abandoned. Thus in early life when a member of the country company of which her father Roger Kemble was manager, the great Mrs. Siddons has been seen, as a contemporary writer describes, “walking up and down both sides of a street in a provincial town, dressed in a red woollen cloak, such as was formerly worn by menial servants, and knocking at each door to deliver the play-bill of her benefit.” And to come to a later instance, the reader may bear in mind that before that ornament of Mr. Crummles's company, Miss Snellicci, took her benefit or “bespeak” at the Portsmouth Theatre, she, in company with Nicholas Nickleby,

and for propriety's sake, the Infant Phenomenon, canvassed her patrons in the town, and sold tickets to Mr. and Mrs. Curdle, Mrs. Borum, and others.

In pursuance of this principle, we find a notice in the bill for Mr. Bickerstan's benefit, at Drury Lane, in May, 1723:—"Bickerstaff being confined to his bed by his lameness, and his wife lying now dead, has nobody to wait on the quality and his friends for him, but hopes they'll favour him with their appearance." And when, just before Mr. Ryan's benefit at Covent Garden in 1735, he had been attacked by a footpad and seriously injured,—several of his teeth having been shot out, and his face and jawbone much shattered,—he addressed a letter in the *Daily Post* to his friends, in which he stated the uncertainty of his being ever able to appear on the stage again, and expressed his hopes "that they would excuse his not making a personal application to them." So again, on the occasion of Mr. Chapman's benefit in 1739, there appears in the playbill an announcement:—"N.B.—I being in danger of losing one of my eyes, and advised to keep it from the air, therefore stir not out to attend my business at the theatre. On this melancholy occasion I hope my friends will be so indulgent as to send for tickets to my house, the corner of Bow Street, Covent Garden, which favour will be gratefully acknowledged by their obedient humble servant, THOMAS CHAPMAN." The excuses set forth in these announcements appear to be very sufficient, and no doubt were so regarded by the patrons in each case, while at the same time they demonstrate the conduct required ordinarily of persons anxious for public support on the occasion of their benefits. Excuses of a lighter kind, however, seem frequently to have been held adequate by the players. Mr. Sheridan, the actor, notifies in 1745 that, "as his benefit was not appointed till last Friday, he humbly hopes that such ladies and gentlemen as he shall omit to wait on will impute it rather to a want of time than to a want of respect and knowledge of his duty." And Mr. Yates, who about the same time had migrated from the West-end stage to the humbler Theatre in Goodman's Field, and announced Fielding's "Miser" for his benefit,—"the part of Lovegold to be attempted by Mr. Yates after the manner of the late Mr. Griffin,"—apologises "for not waiting on ladies and gentlemen, as he is not acquainted with that part of the town." Whether this somewhat lofty plea of ignorance of their neighbourhood, however, affected unfavourably the actor's claims upon the denizens of Goodman's Fields cannot now be ascertained. In time notices of this kind disappeared altogether from the playbills. At the present day an actor, of course, does his best to conciliate patronage, and in his own immediate circle of friends some little canvassing probably takes place to promote the sale of tickets; but these matters are arranged privately, and the general public is relieved from the calls of actors and their personal appeals for support.

Indeed, the old system is now in a great degree reversed, and the actor's place of abode is often stated in his advertisements in order that the public may call upon him to obtain tickets for his benefit, if they prefer that course to purchasing them in the usual way at the box-office of the theatre. In the case of actresses this plan has often been found efficacious in diminishing the exuberant ardour of certain youthful supporters of the stage, by enabling them to discover that the fair performer, who had peculiarly stirred their dramatic sympathies, was hardly seen to such advantage by daylight, in the seclusion of her private dwelling, as when under the glare of gas, with distance lending enchantment to rouge and pearl-powder, and casting an accommodating veil over divers physical deficiencies and unavoidable deteriorations.

As benefits became common, and they were relegated to the close of the season when the general appetite for theatrical entertainments may be presumed to have been tolerably satiated, the actors found it very necessary to put forward performances of an unusual kind to attract patronage and stimulate the curiosity of the public. It was understood that on these occasions criticism was suspended, and great license was permissible. A benefit came to be a kind of dramatic carnival. Any and everything was held to be lawful, and efforts of an experimental kind were almost demanded,—certainly excused under the circumstances. The player who usually appeared wearing the buskin now assumed the sock, and the established comedian ventured upon a flight into the regions of tragedy. Novelty of some sort was indispensable, and the audience, if they might not wholly approve, were yet expected to forbear condemning. The comic actors especially availed themselves of their privileges, and on the strength of their popularity,—the comedian always establishing more intimate and friendly relations between himself and his audience than are permitted to the tragedian,—indulged in very strange vagaries. Mr. Spiller, on the occasion of his benefit at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1720, issued an advertisement:—"Whereas I, James Spiller of Gloucestershire, having received an invitation from Hildebrand Bullock, of Liquorpond Street, London, to exercise the usual weapons of the noble science of defence, will not fail to meet this bold invader, desiring a full stage, blunt weapons, and from him much favour." At another time the same actor announced his benefit in a kind of mock electioneering address, requesting the vote and interest of the public on the ground of his being "a person well affected to the establishment of the theatre." To recite an epilogue while seated on the back of an ass was a favourite expedient of the comedians of the early Georgian period, while the introduction of comic songs and mimicry,—such as the scene of the "Drunken Man," and the song of the "Four-and-twenty Stock-Jobbers," which Mr. Harper performed on his benefit night in 1720,—was found to

be a very attractive measure. Authors who were on friendly terms with the actors, or had reason to be grateful to them, frequently gave them short pieces or wrote special epilogues for their benefits. Sheridan's farce, "St. Patrick's Day, or the Scheming Lieutenant," was a present to Clinch, the actor, and first produced on his benefit night in 1775. Goldsmith felt himself so obliged to Quick and Lee Lewes, who had been the original Tony Lumpkin and Young Marlow in "She Stoops to Conquer," that for the one he adapted a farce from Sedley's translation of "Le Grondeur," and supplied the other with an occasional epilogue, written in his pleasantest manner. When Shuter selected the "Good-Natured Man" for his benefit, the gratified author, in a fit of extravagant kindness, sent the actor ten guineas,—possibly the last he had at the time,—for a box ticket.

On the occasion of his first benefit in London, Garrick furnished his patrons with a remarkable proof of his versatility, for he represented extreme age in "King Lear," and extreme youth in the comedy of the "Schoolboy." At his second benefit he again contrasted his efforts in tragedy and comedy by appearing as Hastings in "Jane Shore," and Sharp in the farce of the "Lying Valet." Kean for his benefit danced as harlequin, gave imitations of contemporary performers, and sang the songs of Tom Tug after the manner of Mr. Incledon. Other actors of very inferior capacity made similar experiments, the fact that the performance was "for a benefit," and "for one night only," being esteemed in every case a sufficient justification of any eccentricity.

It would be hopeless to attempt any detailed account of the many strange deeds done for the sake of benefits. Actresses have encroached upon the repertory of their male playfellows, as when Mrs. Woffington appeared as Lothario, Mrs. Abington as Scrub, Mrs. Siddons as Hamlet, and when portly Mrs. Webb attempted the character of Falstaff. Actors have laid hands on characters which usually were deemed the exclusive property of the actresses,—as when Mr. Dowton resigned his favourite part of Sir Anthony Absolute and donned the guise of Mrs. Malaprop. The Kembles have sought to make their solemn airs and sepulchral tones available in the reckless scenes and hilarious utterances of farce,—and exuberant comedians of the Keeley and Liston pattern have ventured to tincture with whimsicality the woes of tragedy. To draw a crowded house and bring money to the treasury was the only aim. Benefits, in fact, followed the argument of the old drinking song,—merriment at all costs to-night, and sobriety, somehow, on the morrow,—until the benefit season came round again, and then—da capo.

MARTIN FÉREOL.

A TIRED poet might sigh to rest his bones within the little churchyard of St. Cyril. It lies alone, at some distance from the village, on the borders of a pathless common, inclining gently from the forest to the sea. All day the sea-bird wheels and screams around its rude stone Crucifix, and at night the timid rabbit sports amidst its graves and flower-beds.

At low water the listener hears nothing of the sea, beyond a distant murmur from the Gulf of Gascony; but at full tide the waves grate noisily through the bed of silex that divides the churchyard from the level sands, recalling the poet's picture of the dying tempest, when the wind lulls into reluctant peace, and the angry waves retiring,—

“With harsh concussion rake the flinty beach.”

The inscriptions on the tombstones are, some of them, simple and touching, but mostly short and quaint. One of them informs the reader that the deceased, Jean Pomex, lived a smuggler and died of an œdematous leg. On reference to a dictionary of medical terms, it appears the word œdematous comes from the Greek verb *oīdēw*, “I swell,” and signifies the being in a state of tumefaction. The village doctor states further, that an œdematous affection arises when abnormal fat collects beneath the skin in any particular part, and that if you impress the part with your finger, the hole remains just as you made it, precisely as it would in a bladder of lard. At the same time he knows of nothing in such an affection necessarily to determine dissolution, and he does not know why Jean Pomex died of it.

The same tombstone bears testimony to a fact which it was probably not designed to perpetuate,—namely, that the statuaries who cut the inscription must have very nearly forgotten their Latin. Most of the tablets have the statuary's name engraved on them in a corner thus:—“Messier, fecit; Pascault, fecit,” &c.; but that of Jean Pomex appears to have been got up by a firm of statuaries, and the word “fecit” is pluralised accordingly to meet the case; thus:—“Poutis and Dindo, fecits.”

But the thoughtful stranger, compelled to smile at the rustic blunder, or offended at the ill-timed humour of the funereal vagary, may flatter his pensive mood without reserve by turning to the north-west corner of the little cemetery, where, on a stone which spans a double grave, may be read the following inscription:—

“Ci-git un centenaire:—

MARTIN FÉREOL,

Naturaliste distingué, né à St. Cyrille (Landes),

Le 12 Aôut, 1749,

Mort en Bourgogne, au Château-la-Garenne,

Au même jour de l'année 1849;

Agé par conséquent, de cent ans juste.

Zoologiste passionné, comme fieffé misanthrope,

Autant recherchait-il l'amitié des bêtes,

Qu'il dédaignait celle des hommes,

Oubliant que le Christ est mort pour ceux-ci.

A ses côtés on a depuis déposé

Le squelette de sa sœur Babotte;

Le reste a été mangé par les fourmis.

Elle ne l'eût pas voulu autrement.”

The term “naturaliste,” as used in the epitaph, expresses simply the vocation of an animal and bird-stuffer. Martin Féreol, though personally little known, was perhaps, in this sense, the most distinguished naturalist of his age. In a scientific sense, his want of education and solitary life precluded him from excellence; but he was unsurpassed in the practical knowledge of native zoology, and more than once he had had to decline the duty of arbitrament offered to him by critical and learned disputants.

From his earliest infancy the passion of his life made itself manifest. Disdaining the companionship of children, he spent his leisure hours in exclusive communion with the animals of the village, and one of the few occasions which induced him in after life to relax his taciturnity, was the temptation to relate how his mother seriously feared the gift of speech had been refused to him, from the fact of his being unable, at three years old, to articulate a single word, whilst able at the same time to bark with significant and ominous correctness.

At ten years old he had mastered the local ornithology, and was employed by trappers as an adept at calling. At twelve he deceived the parish with a wren's nest of his own construction, and had earned at sixteen the reputation of an accomplished bird-stuffer.

The first half century of his life was passed in his native village, where the conscription and the levy, joined to the military vexations of the period, and the entire loss of his savings, through an elaborate fraud, contributed to foster in his heart misanthropic tendencies, which ultimately ripened into settled hatred under the smart of an aggravated slight.

Though averse to notoriety, and though sullenly repelling the advances of friendship, he was courted by the admirers of his art, and consulted by its leading members. It was he who classed the Egyptian waders for the Museum of Prague, who restored the speci-

mens of the Royal Cabinet at Athens, and who mounted, with Kempfen of Maestricht, the eleven egrets of the Duke of Parma.

At the age of sixty he accepted an engagement as conservator of a private museum. The proprietor, the Baron Raoul de Lermuzeau, a man of large fortune and scientific tastes, invited him to take up his abode at the château, offering to lodge and entertain him, without deducting anything from his stipend. This generous proposition Féreol, dreading to compromise his independence, declined without thanks, preferring to reside in an isolated cottage at the extremity of the village, where he was afterwards joined by his sister Babotte, who there lived with him till the day of his death, surviving him by thirteen weeks.

His engagement at the château procured Féreol, for the rest of his life, an occupation congenial to his tastes. The museum was as extensive as the design of its proprietor, which was to render it a complete cabinet of European zoology. Commenced by the baron's father, under the auspices of Buffon himself, the collection had been enriched by successive additions, till, during an interval of confiscation, the museum had been ravaged and disorganised by wanton or sacrilegious hands.

When confided to Féreol's care, the museum was an assemblage of confusion. Scientific distinctions had been effaced by neglect and insects, dust and exposure had obliterated colour, and scarcely a vestige remained of the artistic labour bestowed on the original arrangement.

Féreol entered on his work with passion, and after restoring the few specimens not hopelessly disfigured, he presented the Baron with an endless catalogue of deficiencies, the gradual supply of which was to be thenceforth the pride and labour of his life. Ten years of diligence sufficed, however, to complete his task. With unlimited means at his disposal, and in a position, through the baron's influence, to command effective co-operation, he was able, at the expiration of that period, to regard the collection as fairly representing the science of the age in respect of European zoology.

From that time forth he became the exclusive guardian of his trust, never absenting himself during the day, and never departing at night without retaining the custody of the keys. The baron treated him as a spoilt child, encouraged his eccentric genius, and humoured his belief in the sovereign importance of his art. It followed that he regarded as paramount whatever concerned the museum; and when the baron, summoned suddenly to Paris to take part in the deliberations of the Royalist coalition, was about to depart in haste, Féreol reproachfully reminded him that he had forgotten to write for a duplicate siskin to the ambassador of France in London.

Into all his arrangements he imported the most inexorable order.

Nothing offended him more than even a momentary displacement of any article under his care. Attached to the library was a cabinet devoted to specimens of foreign ornithology, and the presence of one of these in the European gallery threw him, on one occasion, into a fit of nervous anguish, which lasted till the impropriety was removed. The Baron's grandson had entered the room with a florican, which he was stuffing under Féreol's directions, and came to show what he had done and to receive advice. Féreol for a while suppressed his uneasiness, till compelled at length, by the force of his displeasure, he expressed it thus to his astonished pupil:—"Emportez-moi donc d'ici cet oiseau de la zone torride; nous ferons mieux la leçon chez-lui." What would he have thought of the great national Museum of London, where the saurians of Egypt are deliberately exposed to view in the cabinet expressly and designedly consecrated to the productions of the British Islands!

Subject to a certain reserve, Féreol entertained a feeling of friendship for the baron and his family, including the Abbé Gassendi, the baron's chaplain,—and a serving youth, by name Désiré. For all other persons, with the one exception of his sister, Babotte, he evinced unmixed and inveterate aversion. Gassendi solemnly reproached him with his hatred to men, condemning his exclusive sympathy with brutes as a bestial charity, maintained at the expense of Christian love. Féreol retorted that long study of nature had redressed his intellectual perception, and that, for him, the moral type was not in man. When pressed home by the uncompromising abbé, he took refuge in a sneering generality, expressed in a motto of his own devising, and engraved on the collars of his dogs:—"La pire viande, c'est l'homme."

He was not the less a true man at heart; his misanthropy was negative, and it would have cost him no effort to forbear a tempting vengeance. He clung grimly to his opinions, but would not suffer himself to be dragged by prejudice beyond the limits of good faith. He scrutinised with eager spite a new proposition in natural history, but accepted it with resignation if he found it true. The burden of his life had been the necessity of giving up strict classification. He would have classified even the intermediate links; but nature revealed herself in the course of his discoveries, and he found her absolutely independent where he and his predecessors had assigned her the bondage of a system.

Gratuitous speculations offended him, and he was especially shocked with the views of certain naturalists which lead the mind to deism. He had purchased the treatise of Bolitho, and, when read, had burnt it, lest it should fall into weaker hands. He knew by heart his Buffon. The grand old count was his saint and hero. Eloquence came to him with the bare mention of Buffon's name; he was now the Druid of Montbar, enshrined in yearning memories, and canonised with tears of love; he was now the true knight who entered

the lists without flourish, not to do battle for the high-born lady, but to assert the rights of the oppressed ass. For Buffon's sake he pardoned man. He was nevertheless not blind to the errors of Buffon. He even deemed him impious in his theory of the promiscuous propagation of birds.

He had paid during his life but one visit to Paris, and the impression he retained of it was of the most dismal kind. He had gone there to feed his pride, counting on the status of his art in the great metropolis of European science. He returned abased and humiliated, fuming with resentment and irrevocably settled in his estimate of man. What first annoyed him were the "charges," or grotesque imitations of human groups by stuffed frogs and other creatures so common in Paris shops; but these he ended by tolerating as mere trivial concessions to a low taste. More painful still to his mind were the permanent lies, and stuffed libels upon God's creation, he saw in the windows of the capital, such as animals represented in combinations unwarranted by their kind, and associations unknown in nature. Strange-looking creatures, for example, he beheld, perverted or disguised, and presented to a staring public as "inhabitants of the moon, discovered on the coast of Normandy after a heavy storm." These, and the like, roused his professional wrath, and he forthwith wrote to the Minister of Public Instruction, imploring his paternal interference to prevent the misleading of the ignorant by the publication of such impostures. The Minister's secretary replied that the publication in question, though decidedly regrettable, did not amount to a contravention of any existing law, and that there were therefore no grounds for official interference.

Thus repulsed, Féreol resolved, for the reputation of the cloth, to expostulate personally with the offending brotherhood. His first attempt was with a naturalist of the Rue Graffigny, who received him with politeness, but gave him to know that in Paris the honour of the profession took rank after the success of the business, and that a successful "charge" was an excellent advertisement.

In despair at this result, Féreol stationed himself outside the establishment. The object of his anger was a glass case containing the representation of a northern landscape, with rocks and icebergs, amongst which latter several small animals, ingeniously mutilated, personated tiny white bears in divers attitudes. Féreol watched with agony the admiring multitude, earnestly assuring them there were no such bears in creation, and that the animals in the glass case were ermines with their tails cut off. But finding at length that his exposure of the fraud served only to increase their admiration, he gave up his mission in disgust, much marvelling that Sodom and Gomorrah should be destroyed by fire, and Paris be allowed to stand.

He nevertheless repaired next day to the Rue Quincampoix. Here he found represented a white owl pursued by a gos-hawk. Féreol

affected to suppose the proprietor was himself under an erroneous impression as to the authenticity of the facts represented. He informed him apologetically that a peregrine of his own had killed a brown owl, confined with it in a root-house ; but that in a state of liberty, and free to follow its instincts, neither a falcon nor a gos-hawk would molest an owl. The man replied he had no doubt monsieur was quite correct, but that the group, as represented, was attractive and imposing, which sufficed for the purposes of the trade. Féreol thereupon immediately left Paris, to whose deceitful bird-stuffers he ascribed the calamities of France.

The most charming images of Buffon are most often those which are the least truthful. The captivated votary refuses to be undeceived. For him the lion will be ever lofty, generous, compassionate ; the buzzard mean, cruel, and sneaking. Féreol struggled for a compromise, but his friend the abbé refused to leave him the shadow of an illusion.

“Brutes, sir, differ only by their constitution, their powers, and their necessities ; they are essentially alike in their unscrupulous pursuit of the expedient. Their moral qualities are determined by their incentives, and both the lion and the eagle, to advance their ends, would be as ruthless and as horrible as the rat.”

Féreol assented with reluctance to this disenchanting doctrine. Were all brutes to be thus levelled to the standard of man ? Might he not claim privilege for certain exemplary exceptions ? What was there in the history of the saints to surpass the forbearance of the badger ?

“Forbearance, sir,” interrupted Gassendi with impatience, “is no more in its place as applied to animals than politeness would be as applied to vegetables. The badger does precisely as his inclination leads him. He is no better than the otter, and deserves no kind of credit for preferring carrots to live eels. Take the sheep for example, the chosen emblem of meekness and endurance. That hulking coward lives at peace certainly with all the animals he fears ; but at home, in the sheepfold, is perpetually bullying and butting. You don’t consider him a meritorious beast for not behaving as a wolf ?”

“No,” replied Féreol ; “but the badger knows his strength, and forbears to use it. He reserves for the defence a set of teeth that would more than justify the attack.”

“You know better,” rejoined the abbé. “The badger likes repose and solitude, and is indifferent to flesh ; he avoids fighting, having nothing to gain by it ; but, depend on it, his principles are precisely similar to those of a polecat. I have no wish personally to affront the badger ; but, arguing from the premises, I feel certain, if he thought it would advance his interests, he would assassinate his own mother.”

"I think not," returned Féreol, with a sour smile.

"Well, perhaps not," added the priest; "but, you remember, you were equally decided as to the virtues of your peregrine, till one day, without hunger or provocation, he twisted off the head of the poor brown owl."

This alluded to a fact, and Féreol, convinced at heart of the abbé's orthodoxy, allowed him thus to sum up his proposition:—

"If brutes were men, such a view would be fallacious, as tending to confound vice with virtue; but as brutes are irresponsible, we may well be satisfied to know them sinless, without vainly ascribing virtues where none dare impute vices. Apart from moral guilt, what act of man can more than emulate the raven's ruthlessness, when from the dying lamb he tears the bleeding tongue, or that of the cruel wild-cat calmly feeding from the living hare? On what ground can we exalt the virtues of beings whose vices we regard as instinct? Let us rest, then, contented that these innocent atrocities can go on for ever, without adding to the load of guilt which is for ever accumulating upon those of man."

Féreol's reverence for the ass was Quixotic. He was ever ready to brandish the lance in his defence, and had more than once unseated the abbé in maintaining his championship. His views were, however, simply those of his great master, confirmed by long experience and strengthened by reflection. He held that if Buffon had written nothing else, his eloquent apology of the ass would be enough to immortalise his name, and justify the admiration of mankind. And indeed it is scarcely possible to conceive a more generous and touching paragraph than that devoted by Buffon to that most deserving and least appreciated of domestic quadrupeds. There is nothing to add to the description as it fell at first from the elegant pen that traced it. What was true of the ass in the days of Buffon is true of him now, and the civilization of a century has done nothing to amend his race, or ameliorate his social condition.

His qualities are too well known to admit enumeration, but the barren praises they have earned for him, show clearly that the world, whilst ready enough to acknowledge useful merit, is slow to reward it in a pauper or a poor relation. The dog, caressed and admitted to companionship with his master, repays his confidence with fidelity and affection, but the ass is faithful and affectionate without return, rich in the compensation which honest and pure minds derive from the consciousness of duty done.

"Shouldn't wonder," the abbé used to reply to disquisitions of this kind; "but what is it you hold the ass has got to complain of? He seems to me to be as happy as most other quadrupeds, and he doesn't require much waiting on."

"That's just it," answered Féreol, "you snub the ass on account of his meekness, and you starve him on account of his sobriety. Why

is he to be turned out all night in the rain, and fed with the leavings of the cows? The ass likes comfort as much as the horse does, but because you find he can do with less, you refuse to give him more, forgetting the wages of hard labour and the inviolable rights of merit."

"Pity the ass is such a stubborn brute!" rejoined the abbé, after a short pause.

"The ass is no more a stubborn brute than you are, Monsieur l'Abbé," retorted old Féreol, with vehemence. "People choose to call him stubborn because he occasionally sees through imposition, and resists it with firmness; but we all know that what is firmness in great folks is obstinacy in little folk, and that's how the ass comes to be called a stubborn brute."

"But you do not mean to say the ass is not a stubborn brute?" persisted the abbé, imperturbably.

"I mean to say, sir," replied the old enthusiast, with increasing warmth, "that for one act of obstinacy that can be urged against him, a thousand traits of gentle goodness may be remembered in atonement. To ill-treat an ass is to lay by remorse for a sick bed. An ass oppressed is a saint persecuted. I never see an ass, sir, without feeling disposed to take off my hat to him."

Féreol made endless notes, but seldom communicated them. For him there were no minute facts in animated nature, and a doubt on even the most trivial proposition would keep him in a trance of fever. The detection of an old error deprived him for days of all confidence in his general belief, whilst the discovery of any unsuspected fact transported and consoled him. A fragment rescued from the fire which awaited his productions describes his rapture at finding yellow sea-snails in the craws of thrushes taken during a hard winter on the coast of Brittany. He saw in it the jealous care of nature in providing against the failure of species, and he treasured the fact amongst the most convincing instances of the self-preserving instinct. The thrush tribe are the first to suffer from the rigours of frost. They subsist without great difficulty during the brief interval which suffices to exhaust the torpid insects remaining under loose stones and clods of earth, but when this supply is gone, and the ground continues frozen hard, they languish rapidly, and soon die off, of cold and hunger. On the rocks of certain coasts, the yellow sea-snail is inexhaustible in winter, repeopling the holes and crevices with every tide, and it is possible that in the winter of 1818, when the thrushes perished in helpless multitudes, the race was only rescued from extinction by the individuals inhabiting marine localities, where the rocks provided them resources inaccessible to the inland birds.

The only record which exists of Féreol's own promulgation is in the possession of a gentleman at Dover. It consists of a descriptive

legend, illustrated by a group of animals, and may be resumed in substance from a conversation held with the old naturalist on the life and habits of the mole—"I was fishing," he said, "years ago, for burbots in the Chèvre. I had been motionless by the water for some time, and the frogs began to move about me in all directions. Suddenly, a mole rushed out of a mound of earth at my feet, and attacked a frog with such fury that in an instant it was turned over on its back, and lay gasping, with the mole at full length upon its body. The frog had just leapt to the spot, and the mole had pounced on it before it had time to recover its impetus for another leap. The reptile was now dead, and the mole was devouring its intestines. I took it up, and with it the frog, which the mole still held firmly between its teeth. Presently, however, the dead frog dropped from its jaws, and I then placed the mole by its side on the ground. To my astonishment it again began devouring the frog, as though no interruption had taken place, and as if quite unconscious of my presence. It then occurred to me to preserve the tableau, and I accordingly killed the mole, and set it up with the frog in the attitudes I had just witnessed. I soon afterwards sold the group to an Irish gentleman residing at Dover, and with it I delivered him a descriptive legend. The year following, the gentleman wrote to me from Dover, sending me back the legend for my signature, as some of his friends had questioned its accuracy. I returned it to him signed, and he then sent me for a present a fowling-piece manufactured by Joseph Manton of the town of London."

The friends in question may be less incredulous if they have survived to read the observations on the mole of Geoffroy St. Hilaire, who writes that it has not the common hunger of other quadrupeds; its craving is a kind of rage, and impatience felt to a degree that resembles madness. It becomes violently agitated and appears to be transported with fury when it rushes on its prey. Its gluttony disturbs all its faculties. To satisfy its hunger, it stands at nothing. It gives vent to its voracity, happen what may. Neither the presence of man, nor any other obstacle can arrest or turn it from its object. The mole attacks his enemy by seizing its abdomen, into which he rushes headlong, tearing it open and panting inside it with a kind of savage ecstasy.

To this description Isidore Geoffroy adds the following:—If an animal passes within its reach, the mole runs at it suddenly, rips it open, and speedily devours the entire carcass. Toads are the only creatures to which it shows any repugnance. It greedily devours both frogs and birds, and if even two moles of the same sex are confined together, the weaker of the two is speedily devoured by the other, and very soon there remains nothing of the victim but the skin and a few of the bones. After having satisfied its hunger, the mole is tormented by a burning thirst, and if taken by the neck and held

to a glass of water, may be seen to drink eagerly, notwithstanding the constraint of such a position.

A question which often occupied old Féreol, was the extent to which bats are preyed upon by owls, and his affection for his pupil Désiré took rise in his appreciation of that youth's intelligent exertions in aiding him to remove his doubts. Désiré had entered the baron's service as an infant orphan, and had given early proof of those faunist inclinations which not unfrequently distinguish the untutored rustic. A naturalist by instinct, his delights and tendencies were sylvan, and the genial character of the work assigned to him at the château converted his daily service into a task of love. The baron had placed him at the exclusive disposal of old Féreol, who, from approval and confidence, had proceeded to tenderness, and ultimately adopted him formally, and bequeathed him all his savings.

The attic floor of the château was devoted to the storing of roots and orchard fruits. The walls were hung round with herbs and dried grapes, and layers of pods and seeds were disposed over all the shelves. The garnering of these stores was Désiré's recreation, and his care was to maintain them in artistic and inviting order. The whole floor presented the appearance of a dried garden, the illusion being enhanced by the comforting reality of a crop safely gathered home, and secure from storms and squirrels. To subdue the powerful fragrance from these collections, the windows were kept open night and day, but the attic floor was not the less Désiré's permanent and elected residence. In one corner was an open doorway, leading to a small bed-room. This was Désiré's chamber, arranged after his own heart. The bed had been removed, and in its place was a nest of hay, kept constantly renewed and turned, and refreshed at intervals with clover-heads and scented heath. The window was taken away as being an obstacle to pure air. The space created was nevertheless not left a gaping void; underneath was a trough filled with earth, from which rose a growth of white-thorn, that formed a standing hedge between the apartment and the open air.

Round the room, by way of border, was a continuous line of raised plank, pierced with holes, and covered with layers of close turf, which were maintained in freshness by constant and minute attention. A bench of wild-flowers, in green pots, completed the furniture, the room containing nothing else, excepting a garden watering-pot, and a china foot-bath, filled with live fish. The toilette was elsewhere,—Désiré holding that manly and healthful ablutions were best performed at the pump-trough in the stable-yard.

It was from this leafy observatory that Désiré noted patiently the unfrequent and slow-recurring facts that served to elucidate the contests of the owls and bats. The result appears in a long and most original manuscript, tending to establish the proposition, that bats do occasionally become the prey of owls. It is argued that

bats are flying mice, and mice are the natural prey of owls. Owls and bats are on the wing together, and generally begin to fly at the same moment. When bats swarm over any particular locality, they invariably disperse at the approach of the owl. The flight of bats, though flitting and desultory, affords sufficient interval while they are changing direction, to permit of their being hawked in flying. It is clear in any case that owls can seize bats easily whilst the latter are entering holes, or when alighting on walls. On the other hand, it appeared that Désiré had never been able, with the most attentive watching, to detect owls in the actual pursuit of bats, nor had he ever discovered the remains of bats in the nests or haunts of owls. Bats have, also, an unpleasant odour, different from that of mice of any description. Tame owls have nevertheless been known to take bats without any symptoms of aversion.

Désiré's veneration for Martin was tempered with a kind of awe. His regard for the aged Babotte was a feeling of unmixed love. Babotte was no less a character than her brother Martin, but of an originality quite distinct from his. What in him was acrimonious bile, in her was undiscriminating goodness, and her sole wrong to man was an uncompromising preference for brutes. Her intellectual faculties were of the lowest grade, and the reputation of her childhood had been that of a hopeless idiot. She was unable to read or write, and had never learnt to tell the clock. But she needed neither books nor time-piece. She knew the hours from the dial that needs no repairing, and she read from the statute-book of Nature, in no ambiguous characters, that order, thrift, and cleanliness are God's first law. She lived in uninterrupted conversation with the dumb beings around her, and possessed means of intelligence which were secrets between herself and her correspondents. She could ascertain from the cat what ailed her kitten, and understood an application from the cow for change of pasture. Her parallel has been imagined by Victor Hugo in his romance of "Conscience l'Innocent." The legion tongues of nature, whether expressed in cries, in squeaks, or croaks, were as familiar to her as the voice of her own brother. The birds and frogs gave her warning of the approach of rain and sunshine, and she prepared for change with all the certainty of unerring instinct. She lived amongst the dumb natives of the field, unfear'd and unavoided. No bird suspected her of wrong, no reptile fled at her approach. In the meadow, the magpie refused to move out of her path ; on the plain, the sky-lark flew to its nest before her eyes ; and in the wood, the squirrel remained in sight upon the tree which sheltered her. With Hugo's Innocent she had brought home clustered bees from forest hives ; and with Legouvé's Mélicerte had nursed and cured a dying duckling, which had been seized and partly devoured by a hog.

'Had Babotte been free and friendless, she might well have smiled

on society and passed her way. Her home was ready found in some secluded wood, her food the roots and berries, and her companions the birds and beasts. But Martin, her sole relative and guardian by law, had charge of her person and estate. She had for some time pined under restraint, but had taken strength from habit, and was for many years her brother's only housekeeper. She ordered his cottage with superstitious minuteness, deferred to him with conviction, and reverenced his profession with a religious awe. Her aversion to flesh was invincible, and her brother's taste was so little carnivorous that he abstained habitually. Babotte's resources provided ample compensation. Her larder was the open field, and the forest her kitchen garden. She had wild salads for all seasons, and fragrant herbs in endless and refreshing variety. Martin took all his sister presented him, relying on her instinct with blind faith. Désiré affirms he would have eaten a furze-bush, if Babotte had set it before him.

Martin's affection for his sister was profound, but contained in it a leaven of grimness. He accepted her submissiveness as his due, and notwithstanding her rare talent as a herbalist, he conceived himself removed above her by a gulf of intellectual distance. He nevertheless admitted the reality of her mysterious sympathy with birds and animals, and he held her unrivalled in the preparation of coffee.

He had had with her but one serious quarrel during the course of their companionship, and that one was on the subject of spiders. Babotte objected to disturb the spiders after they had once spun their webs and become fairly domiciled in the apartment. She argued they were not like foul parasites that attack your substance or annoy your person, and that to remove them without motive was a selfish abuse of power. To the plea of cleanliness she replied that the spiders themselves were not inherently dirty, and that she kept the webs clean by dusting them with the parlour bellows. Refuted by Martin, she submitted her defence to the abbé, who treated it as a perverse whim, and the spiders were condemned accordingly.

It was not that Martin at all shared the repugnance shown in general to those most repulsive insects. Spiders made no exception to the universality of his taste for animals, and his apology for their life and usefulness was a point of standing issue between himself and the Abbé Gassendi. The abbé admitted much, but confessed he could imagine a Paradise complete without spiders. It was true, he said, they had their merits like all created beings. Though it was quite false that they exhaled noxious vapours, it was certain they destroyed great quantities of flies in places where birds had no access. They were invaluable in sultry summers when flies greatly plagued the poor, infecting their dwellings, spoiling their food, and buzzing them out of their senses. He recognised further in spiders three distinct qualities,—two positive and one negative; they were

diligent and patient, and not bloodthirsty. They killed for hunger, but did not massacre for rage, like stoats and martens. It might be said the spiders were less destructive than their webs, which were often filled with flies untouched ; and these webs supplied the swallows when insects in the air were scarce. Sometimes, also, the fly struggled through the net, and, falling to the ground, became food for beetles ; for nothing is lost in nature's careful system.

Still, it was difficult to be human and not detest the spider. He passed by common consent as the emblem of a cruel fatality. Poets used him as the extreme term of an odious contrast, and the most impartial writers said unpleasant things of him. Voltaire assigned him the standing epithet of execrable. The English poet, Thomson, described him as a villain, and Boileau denounced him as the assassin with six legs. Solomon, it was true, refers to him advantageously ; but this is apparently by way of apology for his being found in king's palaces, which Solomon does not pretend are any the better for his presence. It was true also that entomologists wrote of spiders with great complacency, but with them the eulogy was professional, and passed for nothing ; there were also men who wrote complacently on virulent pustules, or described with rapture a well-developed pimple on the nose. In fact, no doctrine was too untenable for desperate or eccentric apologists.

Babotte's latest wish was to be eaten by ants, and she had secretly enjoined Désiré to convey her corpse immediately after her death into the forest, and lay it between two ant-hills in a particular spot. Martin had at this time lost all consciousness, and was being gradually extinguished by extreme old age. He died in his hundredth year, and was buried in his native village, conformably to a wish to that effect he had expressed some years before to the baron's family. Babotte, though twenty years younger, survived him only by a few weeks. On the day following that on which she died her body was nowhere to be found. An inquiry was forthwith instituted to unravel the mystery, but the commission, after a searching quest, was compelled to separate without result. Some weeks afterwards, the skeleton was discovered in the forest, perfectly white and dry, every particle of the flesh having been cleanly extracted by the ants. Désiré had meanwhile confessed his pious outrage, but the matter was hushed up through the baron's influence.

The remains of Babotte were afterwards interred with those of her brother in the little churchyard of St. Cyril, where the legend on the tombstone describes in comprehensive terms her singular but characteristic destiny.

VIRELAI.

A LARK in the mesh of the tangled vine,
A bee that drowns in the flower-cup's wine,
A fly in the sunshine,—such is man.
All things must end, as all began.

A little pain, a little pleasure,
A little heaping-up of treasure,
Then no more gazing upon the sun.
All things must end that have begun.

Where is the time for hope or doubt ?
A puff of the wind, and life is out.
A turn of the wheel, and rest is won.
All things must end that have begun.

Golden morning and purple night,
Life that fails with the failing light !
Death is the only deathless one.
All things must end that have begun.

Ending waits on the brief beginning.
Is the prize worth the stress of winning ?
E'en in the dawning the day is done.
All things must end that have begun.

Weary waiting and weary striving,
Glad outsetting and sad arriving ;
What is it worth when the goal is won ?
All things must end that have begun.

Speedily fades the morning glitter ;
Love grows irksome and wine grows bitter.
Two are parted from what was one.
All things must end that have begun.

Toil and pain and the evening rest,
Joy is weary and sleep is best,
Fair and softly the day is done.
All things must end that have begun.

J. P.

M. VICTOR HUGO'S ENGLAND.

Is M. Victor Hugo's long-heralded new work a prodigious jest at the expense of English institutions, laws, manners, customs, and society in general? Such is the question that must repeatedly force itself on the English reader of "L'Homme Qui Rit." Unfortunately for the illustrious author, the answer must be, No: the book is a stupendous anachronism. M. Victor Hugo has gathered up all that he knows, or thinks he knows, about the England of to-day and the England of the feudal times, mingled it in a ludicrous and exasperating jumble with what he knows about the period of Queen Anne, and presented it to us as a true picture of English life in the opening years of the eighteenth century. Nobody will question the genius of the author. Often, throughout the fourteen hundred pages of his four volumes, we have unmistakable evidence of the brilliancy and fertility of his imagination, the force and splendour of his diction. But when he is not at sea with the Biscayan hooker, which he so elaborately shipwrecks in the first volume,—or when he is not carried away into protracted and too morbid analysis of human motives and passions,—he is for the most part committing flagrant blunders, constructing egregious misrepresentations concerning all things English. Our countrymen had of recent years begun to cherish a fond belief that grotesque French caricatures of their ways and manners and costumes, their daily life and conversation, were gradually vanishing even from their last haunts,—the boards of third-rate theatres, or the feuilletons of fourth-rate journals. And the belief was not unwarranted. Although the French have really more of what is called "insularity" than the English,—less inclination and less capacity to comprehend or tolerate the ways of other peoples,—yet the effects of close and constant intercourse, the seeing eye and the hearing ear, were perceptibly softening stubborn prejudices and rectifying ancient distortions. With all the more regret, therefore, will Englishmen peruse these volumes, which the first of living French authors has written about England from what, with all reverence, we may term the "sell-your-wife-at-Smithfield" point of view. M. Hugo's preface precludes any charitable supposition that he is not in earnest.

"In England all is great, even that which is not good,—even oligarchy. The English patriciate is a patriciate in the absolute sense of the word. No feudalism is more illustrious, none more terrible, none more long-lived. . . . It is in England that the phenomenon Nobility should be studied, just as it is in France

that we should study the phenomenon Royalty. The true title of this book should be 'Aristocracy.'"

To depict the English nobility as they are, in themselves and their relations to the social and political system of which they form a part, is thus *M. Hugo's* soberly avowed design. The result is a grotesque apotheosis of our aristocracy, inspired by what we may be pardoned for calling the flunkeyism of awe. At the same time, we have such a mass of anachronism, misconception, and absurdity, regarding the Court, the law, the letters, the whole civil and social state of England, as might warrant an amazed reader in declaring that the author had touched nothing which he did not disfigure. A glance at the salient errors and exaggerations of the book will bear out the strong terms in which it is only fair to protest against its accuracy as a picture of England in Queen Anne's time, and far less, by implication, of England under Queen Victoria.

In 1690, and for many years preceding that date, an itinerant quack, juggler, and ventriloquist named "Ursus," travels "from one end of Great Britain to the other,"—Macaulay's well-known second chapter notwithstanding,—in a wooden booth or van on four wheels, drawn by a wolf. By a very odd chance this obscure vagabond, who is learned and misanthropical, has written up on the inner walls of his booth the exact information which the author wants for his first lesson on "the phenomenon of English nobility." On one side, in ink on a whitewashed board, is a list of "the only things necessary to know," extending to some half-dozen of *M. Hugo's* pages. Among those things are precise, if not accurate, details regarding the insignia, titles, rights, functions, and immunities of the English peerage. For instance:—

"Peers go to Parliament in their coaches in file; the Commons do not. Some peers go to Westminster in open four-wheeled chariots; the use of these, and of coaches emblazoned with coats of arms and coronets, is allowed only to peers, and forms a portion of their dignity." "The eldest sons of peers take precedence of Knights of the Garter. The younger sons do not. . . . Every daughter of a peer is a 'lady'; other English girls are 'miss.'" "A lord never takes an oath, whether to the crown or to the law. His word suffices; he says, 'Upon my honour.'" "By a law of Edward the Sixth, peers have the privilege of committing manslaughter. A peer who kills a man without premeditation is not prosecuted." "A peer sent for by the king has the right to kill one or two deer in the royal park." "A peer holds in his castle a baron's court of justice." "It is unworthy of a peer to walk the street in a cloak, followed by two footmen. He should only show himself attended by a great train of gentlemen of his household." "A peer is a clerk, though he knows not how to read; in law he knows." "A duke has a right to a canopy, or cloth of state, in all places where the king is not present; a viscount may have one in his house; a baron has a cover of assay, which may be held under his cup while he drinks. A baroness has the right to have her train borne by a man in the presence of a viscountess." "Eighty-six tables, each with five hundred dishes, are served each day, at each meal, in the royal palace." "If a commoner strike a peer his hand is cut off." "A lord is all but a king. The king is very nearly a god. The earth is a lordship. The English address God as 'my Lord!'"

Now, these important and impressive facts are seriously intended by M. Hugo to describe the English nobility about the period of the Revolution ; but the reader can see at a glance that what is not erroneous or exaggerated in the description is in a great measure utterly inapplicable to any period within some centuries of that in which the story of "L'Homme Qui Rit" is laid. Ursus's second catalogue, of solaces for those who have nothing, is a list, half-a-score pages long, of nobles who have vast possessions, splendid mansions, and huge revenues ; but M. Hugo has taken it into his head to play fantastic tricks in the way of creating a number of peers before 1690, who, in fact, were not created till many years afterwards,—Viscount Lonsdale, for instance, created 1696, and Baron Coningsby of Coningsby, created 1716. The most important name on the list of personages is "Linnaeus, Lord Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily," who owns the palace of Hunkerville in London, the palace of Corleone Lodge at Windsor, eight castle-wards, "one at Burton-on-Trent, with a royalty on the carriage of plaster of Paris ;" besides "nineteen boroughs and villages with reeves, and the whole district of Penneth Chase, all of which bring his lordship £40,000 a year."* Setting aside altogether the glaring improbability involved in placing these inscriptions in a mountebank's travelling waggon, and the additional improbability that such a vehicle, under James II. and William III., "travelled from one end of Great Britain to the other,"—it will be seen that M. Hugo has not started happily in his self-imposed task of initiating his countrymen into the study of our English nobility.

Nor is he more happy or more "vraisemblable" when he comes to the Court. Granting the existence in England of the gangs whom he describes as trafficking in children,—buying them, and subjecting them to cruel processes which wholly changed their features, altered their proportions, and in a word, obliterates them,—we must demur to the association which M. Hugo establishes between these atrocious outcasts and James II. That monarch, we are told,

"Tolerated the comprachicos for a good reason,—he made use of them ; at least, it chanced that he did so more than once. We do not always disdain to use what we despise. This vile trade, an excellent expedient sometimes for the higher one which is called State policy, was willingly left in a wretched condition, but was not persecuted. There was no surveillance, but a certain amount of attention. Thus much might be useful,—the law closed one eye, the king opened the other. Sometimes the king went so far as to avow his complicity. These are the audacities of monarchical terrorism. The disfigured child was marked with the fleur-de-lys ; they took from him the mark of God, they put on him the mark of the king. Jacob Astley, knight and baronet, lord of Melton Constable, in the county of Norfolk, had in his family a child who had been

* He, indeed, is not to be found in any peerage ; but as Lord Clancharlie fills a conspicuous and not altogether picturesque part in the romance, we think that M. Hugo was right in creating a new peer to fill the place.

sold, and on whose forehead the dealer had imprinted a fleur-de-lys with a hot iron. In certain cases, if it was held desirable for some reason to verify the royal origin of the new position made for the child, they took these means."

Without any affection for the memory of James II., we may well desire further evidence before believing all this about the devout prince "who persecuted the Jews and trampled out the gypsies," but was good to the comprachicos. Yet on this charge against the memory of the last Catholic king,—baby-buyers, be it remarked, were good Catholics, and therefore stood well with all the Stuarts,—the whole story hinges. Lord Linnaeus Clancharlie, already mentioned, had accepted the Commonwealth, and gone into exile at the Restoration. By a lady of rank who had been his mistress, he had a son; and, when he went abroad, the lady transferred her favours to Charles I. Consequently, the boy was pushed on at Court; he took the courtesy title of "Lord David Dirry-Moir," from a lordship of his mother's "in the great Scottish forest where they find the krag bird, which scoops out its nest in the trunk of oaks;" and the favour which he enjoyed with the last two Stuarts, odd as it may seem, continued under William and under Anne. But in all likelihood the revenues from the lordship in that mysterious krag-haunted Scottish forest were not large; and James II. desired a better provision for the illegitimate son of one of his brother's innumerable mistresses. Lord Clancharlie had espoused abroad the daughter of Bradshaw the regicide; she had borne him a son; but, both father and mother dying, the legitimate heir was left a defenceless infant, and King James resolved to confer his patrimony and title on the illegitimate son. Royal agents obtained possession of the child; he was sold to the comprachicos for £10, a royal letter of guarantee being given with him, couched in the concise words, "Jussu regis; Jefferies," to hold the purchasers exempt from consequences; and, "one fine morning," this little transaction being completed, King James declared Lord David Dirry-Moir, "in default of legitimate issue, and by the royal good pleasure" (which M. Hugo elsewhere tells us is equal to the law), heir of his natural father Lord Linnaeus Clancharlie. By patents duly registered in the House of Lords, his majesty "instituted Lord David in the titles, rights, and privileges of the said late Lord Linnaeus Clancharlie, on the sole condition that Lord David should marry, when she became of suitable age, a girl at that moment quite a child and aged a few months only, whom the king had in her cradle made a duchess, it was not very well known why." This baby-duchess, Josiana by name, is the illegitimate daughter of the king; and, by some singular eccentricity which M. Hugo's study of the English nobility does not make him even seek to explain, the publicly and formally acknowledged heir of Lord Clancharlie cannot assume the title of his father, whose estates he nevertheless enjoys, until he shall have married the duchess. The lady was merely a duchess in the air,—she had no title but "the

Duchess Josiana ;" as for her property, it was large, and derived in great part from the gifts made to the Duke of York by "Henrietta of England, Duchess of Orleans, the first woman in France after the queen." Neither history nor scandal mentions this remarkable young lady, who lived in intimacy with Queen Anne, her elder sister, and provoked the royal jealousy by her beauty, youth, and wit,—nay, also, as M. Hugo hints, because the queen looked with a too kindly sentiment on Lord David Dirry-Moir. Of the strange moral nature with which Josiana is endowed,—a compound of Circe, Messalina, and Lucrezia Borgia,—it is not our purpose here to speak. Perhaps the worst that M. Hugo has said about Josiana's morals, is not so bad as what he has told us about her manners,—one of which, we are shocked to hear, was to "ride on horseback on a man's saddle, in spite of the invention of the women's saddles, introduced into England in the fourteenth century by Anne, wife of Richard II." A royal duchess,—even with a bar sinister,—riding en cavalier in 1705! But that is a trifle : for we find Josiana at a boxing match, and subsequently attending alone the representation of Ursus's mountebank troop in the court-yard of "l'inn Tadcaster," on the "bowling-green" of Southwark, where sailors, chair-bearers, porters, and all the rabble of the great city, gathered to the perpetual fair going on in the open. Josiana has given the private key of her inner apartments to two persons,—to Lord David, who was her "engaged ;" and to one Barkilphedro, who had not that claim to confidence. Once a domestic of Josiana's, he had, through her intercession, obtained the place of "unsealer of the bottles of the sea" at the Admiralty,—his duty being to open all sealed bottles cast on shore with "messages from the sea" thrown overboard from ships. Ugly, mean, and despicable, this mere clerk, enjoying a salary of a hundred guineas a year, retains the confidence of Josiana, gains the ear of the queen,—a fact explained by the delicacy and importance of his office, which now and then gave him the possession of State secrets that had tossed on the ocean for a dozen years or so,—and is admitted to the privacy of the two sisters. For instance :—

"One day at Hampton Court, in the garden, being behind the duchess, who was behind the queen, he heard Anne, conforming in her heavy way to the prevailing fashion, emit sentences. "The beasts are happy," said the queen ; "they do not risk going to hell." "They are there already," answered Josiana. This reply, which abruptly substituted philosophy for religion, gave displeasure. If perchance it was profound, Anne felt herself shocked by it. "My dear," she said to Josiana, "we speak of hell like two fools. Let us ask Barkilphedro how the matter stands. He ought to know those things." "As devil?" asked Josiana. "As beast," replied Barkilphedro, and he made a reverence. "Madame," said the queen to Josiana, "he has more wit than we have."

The Admiralty clerk, confidant of the queen, *tutoyé* by the duchess, on intimate terms with Lord David Dirry-Moir, making way at Court by his faculty for backbiting, is not, as M. Hugo naïvely informs us, known

to history. "From day to day, Queen Anne took Barkilphedro more and more into favour. Sarah Jennings is famous; Barkilphedro is unknown; his favour remained obscure." We know it did. But perhaps, without noticing the author's insinuations against Queen Anne's moral character, or his extraordinary hint that "Brummel" was one of those low favourites of the Court whose portrait is drawn in Barkilphedro, we may quit the precincts of the palace, to see whether M. Hugo is any more at home in other regions of English life.

The boxing match at which Josiana is present takes place at "Lambeth, a parish where the Archbishop of Canterbury has a palace,—though the air of the spot is not salubrious,—and a rich library open at certain hours to people of respectability." The duchess asks Lord David if women can go; he answers in Latin,—everybody knows how fashionable Latin was at Anne's court,—"*Sunt feminæ magnates;*" meaning that, though citizenesses might not go, noblewomen might. "A duchess enters everywhere," says M. Hugo; "so Josiana saw the boxe." She made, however, "the concession of dressing as a gentleman, a thing then very usual. Women scarcely ever travelled otherwise. Out of six persons whom the Windsor coach contained, it was seldom that one or two were not women clothed as men. It was a sign of gentry. . . . Josiana only betrayed her quality by this,—that she looked through an opera-glass, which was the act of a gentleman." The fact that Lady Josiana is under his escort, prevents Lord David from "figuring in the match;" a mighty pity, for that nobleman of forty years, who "held a magisterial place in the gay life of London," and was "venerated by nobility and gentry," was the best "trainer" of his day, and the "living rule of boxing matches." When he was second, he followed his man foot by foot, bottle in one hand, sponge in the other; cried to him to strike fair,—which M. Hugo translates "*frapper ferme*,"—"suggested to him dodges, advised him while he fought, cleaned him when he bled, picked him up when he fell, took him on his knees, put the bottle-neck between his teeth, and with his own mouth full of water blew a fine rain into his eyes and ears, which reanimated the dying man." When Lord David was arbiter the friends of the loser never tore up the stakes and mobbed the ring; when he trained, his man had "in the morning a raw egg and a glass of sherry, at noon half raw leg of mutton and tea, at four o'clock toast and tea, in the evening pale ale and toast." In such studies did Lord David "prepare himself for political life;" and the reader can understand how much his services were missed at the "boxe" which M. Hugo describes. There are forty thousand guineas on the event, besides the stakes; and among the betters we meet an old friend, "the laird of Lamyrbau, which is of the march of Lothian." The boxers are an Irishman of Tipperary, "named from the name of his natal mountain, Phele-

ghe-madone," and a Scotchman; the first a Heenan, the second a Sayers. Indeed, the fight is neither more nor less than the celebrated combat for the championship of the world, carried back a century and a half, and adorned with many particulars due to M. Victor Hugo's vigorous fancy. The men, exact counterparts of the modern champions, have passed the preceding night side by side in the same bed, and slept together; and they have each drunk in the same glass three fingers of port wine. Each is followed by a group of backers, roughs who threaten the umpires in case of need, wretches in tatters, bearing the stamp of habitual criminals. The month is January; the weather, a north wind, hoar frost, and a fine rain; the *pères de famille* among the spectators may be recognised by the fact that they have opened their umbrellas. The men shiver; "Doctor Eleanor Sharp, nephew of the Archbishop of York," exhorts them to warm themselves by setting-to at once. They obey, but languidly; whereupon the "Reverend Doctor Gumbraith, one of the forty Fellows of All Soules College," considerately suggests that they should have gin poured into them,—"Qu'on leur entonne du gin." The referees decide against the humane counsel, and by-and-by "first blood" is called, but we are not told for whom. The combat thickens; soon the crowd is crying, "Helmsgail,"—the Scotchman,—"has tapped his claret!" "Bung his peepers!" Helmsgail "does better," he strikes the Irishman on the breast bone. Viscount Barnard cries, "A foul hit!" the laird of Lammerlaw, "bets off;" the whole company, "stop the match." But the Irishman sets all right again; he continues the contest on the condition that he may have the privilege of giving also a foul hit; everybody shouts "Agreed!" and to it they go again. Phelem "gets into chancery," and his face is reduced to raw flesh; but he ventures another round, and, just as he is receiving a last crushing blow, he strikes the triumphant Scotchman full in the belly,—"au nombril." "Well paid back!" shout the spectators; and "everybody claps hands, even the losers." Helmsgail will not recover; but Lord Robartes, *custos rotulorum* of the county of Cornwall, cries, "I gain twelve hundred guineas," and everybody is happy—except the Duchess Josiana. Leaving the spot, she takes the arm of Lord David,—"a thing tolerated between people who are 'engaged,'" as M. Victor Hugo, that profound student of the phenomenon of English nobility, is careful to inform us; and she complains that, although the spectacle had been very fine, it had disappointed her, for it had not amused her,—"J'aurais cru que cela m'ôterait mon ennui. Eh bien, non." The Duchess Josiana was somewhat hard to please.

If, in this picture of English "life" in 1705, M. Hugo has borrowed a good deal from the present day, *en revanche*, when he comes to deal with English learning under Queen Anne, he has drawn his materials freely from the dark ages. We have the mountebank Ursus addressing the "gentlemen and gentlewomen" of Southwark, in an astonishing

farrago of classical references and superstitions. After demolishing a number of false theories,—for example, that if any one smell the herb valerian a lizard is produced in his brain; or that Saint Jerome had a clock on the chimneypiece of his cabinet,—he proceeds to set forth what are “vérités.” The skin of a sea-calf is a protection against the thunderbolt; the toad feeds on earth, which causes the formation of a stone in its head; the Jericho rose blossoms on Christmas eve; serpents cannot endure the shadow of the ash; the elephant has no joints, and is obliged to sleep erect against a tree; if a cock’s egg is hatched by a toad, the progeny will be a scorpion, which will bring you a salamander; and so on. We may admit the possibility that such stuff was used, to make the ignorant gape, by a poor itinerant who profited by the wonder he aroused; but what are we to say when we find that the theology, the medical and physical science, the historical learning of the day, were precisely on a par with those lucubrations of the mountebank? The discourses of Ursus are carried to the ears of “three experts in *omni re scibili*, who conduct the censorship of all words pronounced in public within the one hundred and thirty parishes of London, the seventy-three of Middlesex, and, by extension, the five of Southwark.” One member of this Board, which sits at Bishopsgate, is a doctor in theology, delegated by the Dean of Westminster; one is a doctor in medicine, delegated by the “College of the Eighty;” the third, a doctor in history and civil law, delegated by Gresham College. Over the heads of the trio, in their hall, are the three busts of Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Eacus; and before this imposing tribunal Ursus is summoned. Questioned as to the right by which he speaks in public, he answers, first, that he is a philosopher. Informed that that gives him no such right, he submits that he is also a mountebank, and is graciously assured that that makes a difference, and that as mountebank he may speak, but as philosopher he must hold his tongue. He is then charged with denying the most obvious truths, and propagating revolting errors. “For example, you have said that virginity excluded maternity.” “I have not said that,” is the reply; “I have said that maternity excluded virginity.” The theologian becomes thoughtful, and growls, “Indeed; that is quite the opposite.” The historian advances to the aid of the discomfited theologian. “Accused, you have denied that the battle of Pharsalia was lost because Brutus and Cussius had met a negro.” “I have said that the fact of Caesar being a better captain had also something to do with it.” “With regard to the accidents that occurred to the cavalry of Mithridates, you have disputed the virtues of herbs and plants, and denied that such an herb as the securiduca can make horse-shoes fall off.” “Pardon; I have said that only the herb *sferra-cavallo* can possibly do that. I deny the virtue of no plant.” “You have declared that it was silly in Scipio, when he wanted to open the gates of Carthage, to take for key the herb

Æthiopis, because that herb has not the property of breaking bolts." "I have merely said that he would have done better to use the herb Lunaria." "That is an opinion," murmurs the historian; and he falls into silence. The theologian returns to the charge. "You have classed orpiment among arsenical products, and you have said that it was possible to poison with orpiment. The Bible denies it." "But arsenic affirms it," says Ursus; and the medical judge strikes in with an assurance that the answer is not foolish. The theologian continues, "You have said that it is false that the basilisk is king of serpents under the name of Cockatrice." "Most Reverend, so far am I from wishing to injure the basilisk, that I have said it certainly had the head of a man." "Perhaps so; but you have added that Poerius had seen one which had the head of a falcon. Could you prove it?" "Not easily," says Ursus. Here he loses ground a little; and the theologian pushes his advantage. "You have said that a Jew who becomes a Christian does not smell well." "But I have added that a Christian who becomes a Jew smells worse." Enough of the doctor in theology; now for the doctor in medicine. "It is proved," this worthy declares, "that crystal is sublimated ice, and that diamond is sublimated crystal; it is established that ice becomes crystal in a thousand years, and that crystal becomes diamond in a thousand centuries. You have denied it." "Not at all," replies Ursus, sadly. "I have only said that in a thousand years the ice had time to melt, and that, as for the thousand centuries, it was not easy to reckon them." "You have denied that plants can speak." "In no wise. But, to have that power, they must be under a gibbet." "Do you admit that the mandragora shrieks?" "No, but it sings." Ursus is then called to account for an alleged denial of the existence of the phoenix; and his questioner, with the courteous observation that he is a jackass,—"Vous êtes un bourrique,"—passes to another subject. "You have confessed that the elder-tree cured the quinsy, but you have added that it was not because it had in its root a fairy excrecence." "I have only said that it was because Judas hanged himself on an elder-tree." "A plausible opinion," mutters the theologian, not sorry to see his comrade so capitally answered; and the battle is maintained yet a while, Ursus rather gaining the advantage. By-and-by the doctor in medicine "becomes savage." "You practise medicine?" he says to Ursus, who modestly and timidly admits it. "On the living?" "Rather than on the dead." . . . "Be warned of this: if you attend to a sick man, and he dies, you will be punished with death." "And if he recovers?" "In that case you will be punished with death. . . . If death takes place, we punish ignorance; if a cure, we punish presumption. The gallows in either case." Finally, the redoubtable three resolve not to exercise their power of sending the mountebank off to prison; and the theologian, "with a furious air," pronounces the sentence of the court,—"Begone!"

you are set free!" Now, all this may be jest or satire; but it is much more probably meant in dreadful earnest, as a picture of the period. And not merely as a picture of the period in which the action of the novel passes, but also of the present condition of the English theological courts. For what says M. Hugo? "These theological jurisdictions still exist in England, and exercise a useful severity,"—sévissent utilement. "On the 23rd of December, 1868, by sentence of the Court of Arches, confirmed by judgment of the Lords of the Privy Council, the Reverend Mackonochie was condemned to censure, and to costs besides, for having lighted candles on a table. The liturgy does not jest." We wish we could suppose that M. Hugo did.

We have seen what M. Victor Hugo represents English life and letters to have been under Queen Anne, in the days of South, Burnet, Swift, Addison, Bolingbroke, and Newton. Now for a peep at his pictures of English law and justice. "L'Homme Qui Rit," who is a member of Ursus' troupe, has let fall certain words suggested by the contrast between the queen's head on a farthing and the petty coin itself,—the counter of the poor. Ursus takes alarm. "Seditious words. Leze-majesty." And he thus admonishes his young friend :

"There is one rule for the great,—do nothing; and one rule for the small,—say nothing. The poor man has but one friend,—silence. He ought to pronounce only a monosyllable,—'Yes.' To confess and consent, that is all his right. 'Yes,' to the judge. 'Yes,' to the king. The great, if it seems good to them, give us blows of the stick; I have received them; it is their prerogative, and they nowise lose any of their greatness by breaking our bones. . . . Take care. Become serious. Learn that there are punishments. Imbibe legislative truths. Thou art in a country where the man who cuts down a little tree of three years old is peacefully led away to the gibbet. . . . Whoever strikes anyone in Westminster Hall is imprisoned for life, and his goods are confiscate. Whoever strikes anyone in the king's palace has the right hand cut off. The man convicted of heresy in a bishop's court is burned alive. . . . He who is guilty of felony towards her majesty is disembowelled alive; they tear out his heart, with which they buffet his two cheeks. Impress on thyself these notions of law and justice. . . . Nevertheless, England is admirable on this score,—that its legislation is very mild."

Such is the prelude. A few days afterwards, Ursus makes his companion look at a man who passes across the "bowling-green;" and describes his functions. He is dressed in black, and carries a kind of club in his hand. He is the "wapentake," otherwise "le bailli de la centaine," otherwise "prepositus hundredi." He is "a terrible officer." What he carries is the "iron-weapon," upon which he swears,—"it is for that he is called the wapentake,"—and with which he afterwards touches you. That means "follow me;" you must follow him whithersoever he leads; and "if you resist you are hanged." Elsewhere, remarking on the changes that have taken place in the laws and customs of our country, and the confusion of powers that existed in "ancient England,"—that is, England at the date of his story,—M. Hugo tells us that "the confusion between police

and justice has ceased. The names have remained, the functions are modified. We believe even that the word 'wapentake' has changed its meaning. It signified a magistracy, now it signifies a territorial division ; it specified the hundred-man, it specifies the canton." It is needless to remark that the word "wapentake" was never used in any but a territorial sense ; that if it survives at all in actual use, it is only in the most strictly local and technical sense ; and that the days in which it was current as an institution are at least thrice as far removed from the period of M. Hugo's story, as that is from the present day. But *majora canamus*. "L'Homme Qui Rit" is one morning summoned by the "wapentake." He is seated in the mountebank's booth drinking tea, when he is touched on the shoulder with the "iron-weapon," and looks up to find the mysterious officer pointing grimly over his own shoulder with the thumb of the left hand,—much as a modern policeman might signal a scamp who was "wanted" to quit a thieves' lodging-house. The prisoner is absolutely innocent ; indeed, he is only "wanted" that he may be identified with the view of immediate elevation to the peerage ; but he follows without thought or word of resistance. In a procession headed by the "wapentake," and closed by the "justicier-quorum," a "squad of police" marches off the innocent man, in dead silence, to the prison of Southwark. M. Hugo explains that "arrest without explanation, which would much astonish an Englishman of to-day, was a police proceeding customary enough then in Great Britain ;" and silent capture, which had been much practised by the *Holy Vœhme* in Germany, was "admitted by the Germanic custom, which governs one half of the old English laws, and enjoined, in certain cases, by the Norman custom, which governs the other half." Justinian's chief of the palace police was called *silentarius imperialis*. The English magistrates who practised this sort of capture justified themselves,—in 1705, be it remembered,—by numerous Norman texts : "Lundulphus Sagax, paragraph 16 ;" "Charter of King Philip, in 1307 ;" "Statutes of Henry First of England, chapter 53 ;" and especially "Vetus Consuetudo Normanniae, MS. 1 part, sect. 1, cap. ii.,"—which certainly does not inculcate silent arrest, though it prescribes vigour and discretion. Another authority was "in charta Ludovici Butini pro Normannis, le chapitre 'servientes spathæ.' " The silent arrest indicated that to a certain extent State reasons mingled with police operations ; and it had been employed by Edward III, when he seized Mortimer ; by Warwick the king-maker ; by Cromwell, "especially in Connaught." After such an array of authorities, can we withhold faith from anything M. Hugo has told us about "le wapentake," or proceeds to tell us about "la cave penale" of the prison of Southwark ? Between his two files of "convict-keepers," "L'Homme Qui Rit," preceded by the "wapentake" and followed by the "justicier-quorum," is led off to the prison. If the "wapentake" is an embodiment of the awe of justice, the justicier-

quorum is an embodiment of the pomp of the law,—in a word, a full-blown beadle. In him “ shone forth all the majesty possible to the bailiff's follower,”—recoers. “ His costume was something midway between the splendid accoutrement of the Oxford musical doctor, and the sober and black attire of the Cambridge Doctor of Divinity. He had the garments of a gentleman under a long ‘ godebert,’—which is a mantle furred with the backs of Norway hares. He was half gothic and half modern, having a perruke like Lamignon, sleeves like Tristan l'Hermite.” His big round eye held the prisoner with the fixity of an owl; he “ walked in cadence,”—like the pantomimic policeman; and thus he followed the “ Laughing Man,” past the chapels of the “ Recreative Religionists and the Hallelujah League, two sects of that time which still exist to day,” through “ the ‘ roads’ not yet built, the ‘ rows’ where the grass grew, and the desert ‘ lanes,’ by many zigzags,” till the prison was reached. “ A pagan temple, built by the Cattieuchlans for the Mogons, who are ancient English gods, then turned into a palace for Ethelwulf and a fortress for Saint Edward, then raised to the dignity of a prison by John Lackland in 1199,—such was the jail of Southwark,”—“ an ancient place of exorcisms and torments.” M. Hugo says a good deal, with good reason, of the forbidding aspect presented by English prisons at that time,—long before John Howard's day,—but we cannot admire his description of their interiors. Skipping a dissertation on the magistratures of the year 1705, in which the student of law and history will find some very amusing material, let us follow the “ wapentake” and his prisoner to the “ penal cellar,” some thirty feet underground at the very least, in which the torture is administered. For everybody knows that the “ peine forte et dure” was an essential part of English law under Queen Anne, and was administered with all the grim pomp and dismal circumstance of the question in the Inquisition at Seville. The “ penal cellar” has for door a plate of iron, on which, after a descent that seems infinite, the “ wapentake” strikes with the “ iron-weapon,” making a noise like a Chinese gong. A steep flight of steps leads downwards to a vault lit by a single cresset hung between four stone pillars. On the ground, his arms and legs tied to the pillars, and extended in the form of a St. Andrew's Cross, lies face upwards a naked man, with a sheet of iron on his breast, on which a number of huge stones are piled. Near the victim, in an arm-chair on a stone dais, sits the Sheriff of the County of Surrey, “ with the majestic rigidity of a Roman clothed with the Augustan dignity.” He has in his hand “ a bouquet of roses, which would have instructed a man less ignorant than the ‘ Laughing Man,’ the right to judge while holding a bunch of flowers characterised the magistrate who was at once royal and municipal. The Lord Mayor of London still judges thus. To aid the judges in judging,—such was the function of the first roses of the season.” On either side of the

Sheriff stand a doctor of law and a physician; an assistant of the executioner, wholly dressed in leather, is posted by the victim. The Sheriff, smelling his roses in the one hand, with the other raises his white rod, saying, "Obedience to her Majesty!" Now commences a scene which it would be difficult to rival even by the most hideous distortion of Mrs. Radcliffe's darkest imaginings.

The Sheriff,—whom Chamberlayne, M. Hugo's great authority, styles "the life of Justice, of the Law, and of the County,"—begins to scold the victim for his obstinate silence, "which is a detestable libertinism, and constitutes, among the deeds punishable with the cashlit, the crime and offence of oversenesse." Then chimes in the doctor of law, with a voice of grim indifference:—"Overhernessa. Laws of Alfred and Godrun; chapter the sixth." The Sheriff continues:—"The law is venerated by all, except the thieves who infest the woods where the hinds drop their young." The doctor repeats:—"Qui faciunt-vastum in foresta ubi dame solent founinare." Again the Sheriff:—"He who refuses to answer the magistrate is suspected of all the vices. He is reputed capable of every mischief." And again the doctor:—"Prodigus, devorator, profusus, solax, ruffianus, ebriosus, luxuriosus, simulator, consumptor patrimonii, elluo, ambro, et gluto." Again the Sheriff:—"All the vices imply all the crimes. He who avows nothing confesses all. He who is silent before the questions of the judge is, in fact, a liar and a parricide." "Mendax et parricida," echoes the doctor of law. Again the Sheriff:—"Man, it is not permitted to any one to absent himself by silence. False contumacy,"—le faux contumace,—"wounds the law. It is like Diomed wounding a goddess. . . . Whoso withdraws himself from inquiry robs the truth. The law has made provision against that. For such cases, the English have in all time enjoyed the right of fosse, and fork, and fetters." "Anglica Charta, year 1088; Ferrum, et fossam, et fureas, cum aliis libertatibus;" such is the lawyer's response. The Sheriff proceeds to tell the insensible prisoner, as the law demands, how, being "diabolically refractory," he had merited to be "helled,"—avait du être géméné,—and had been, in the terms of the criminal statutes, put to the ordeal of the torment called the "peine forte et dure." Stripped naked and tied to the pillars, as many stones have been heaped on his body as he can bear,—"and more," says the law. "Plusque," reverberates the doctor of law. "Satanically persevering in silence," the prisoner,—since it was fair that the obstinacy of the law should be equal to that of the criminal,—had on the first day nothing either to eat or drink. The ever-ready doctor quotes at once "Consuetudo Britannica, article five hundred and four: Adde augmentum abstinentiæ ciborum diminutione." The Sheriff, continuing, informs the prisoner that on the second day he has had something to eat and nothing to drink; three mouthfuls of barley bread have been thrust between his teeth. The third day, no food, but something to drink;

a pint of water, taken from the sewer of the prison,—ruisseau d'égout,—has been at three draughts poured into his mouth. The fourth day is now come; if he fail to answer, he must be left there till he dies; and none will aid him in the agony, even if the blood should gush from his throat, his beard, his armpits, and all the openings of the body, from the mouth to the loins. All which is duly confirmed by the doctor in barbarous Latin. Again the Sheriff:—"Man, attend; for the consequences concern you. If you renounce your execrable silence, and confess, you will only be hanged, and you will have a right to the meldefeo, which is a sum of money." "Damnum confitens," says the doctor, "habeat le meldefeo. 'Leges Inæ,' chapter twenty." "Which sum," resumes the Sheriff, "shall be paid to you in doitkins, suskins, and galihalpens,—the only case in which that money may be employed, in the terms of the statute of abolition, year the third of Henry V.; and you will have the right of 'scortum ante mortem,' and will be afterwards strangled at the gibbet. Such are the advantages of confession. Will you be good enough to respond to justice?" This appeal failing, the victim is entreated to think on her majesty, not to resist our gracious queen, to be a loyal subject. A rattling in the wretch's throat. Then says the Sheriff:—"The wisdom of the law has chosen this extreme hour, to have what our ancestors called the judgment by mortal cold,—seeing that it is the moment in which men are believed on their yea or their nay." "Judicium pro frodmortell, quod homines credendi sint per suum ya et per suum na. Charter of King Adelstan, volume first, page one hundred and seventy-three,"—such is the learned response of the lugubrious lawyer. Still silence beneath the stones; the Sheriff's cry to "open his eyes in the name of the law" is unheeded by the moribund man. Then the Sheriff, dramatically waving on high his rose-bunch, begins a long tirade, of which we give a few sentences:—

"Oh, wretch, speak! The law entreats thee before it exterminates thee. Thou wishest to seem dumb, think of the tomb, which is dumb; thou wishest to seem deaf, think of damnation, which is deaf. . . . Hearken, my like, for I am a man! Hearken, my brother, for I am a Christian! Hearken, my son, for I am an old man! Beware of me, for I am the master of thy sufferings, and I will straightway become terrible. The horror of the law constitutes the majesty of the judge. Consider that I myself tremble before myself. My own power dismays me. Do not push me to extremes. I feel myself full of the holy wickedness of chastisement. . . . Corpse commenced, hear me! Unless thou choose to expire here during hours, days, and weeks; to suffer prolonged death-pangs under a frightful anguish, starved and filthy, beneath the weight of these stones, alone in this subterranean, abandoned, forgotten, abolished, given to the rats and the weasels to eat, gnawed by the beasts in the darkness, while people will go and come, will buy and sell, and coaches will roll through the street above thy head; unless thou dost prefer to sound the death-rattle without pause in the depth of thy despair, gnashing thy teeth, weeping, blaspheming, without a physician to assuage thy pains, without a priest to offer to thy soul the divine glass of water. Oh! if thou wouldest feel slowly gather to thy lips the frightful foam of the sepulchre! Oh! I implore and adjure

thee, hear me! I call thee to thine own aid; have pity on thyself, do what is required of thee, turn thy head, open thine eyes, and say if thou recognisest this man."

This man is "L'Homme Qui Rit," none other than the lost son of Lord Clancharlie. The eyes of the victim are forcibly opened: he recognises the captive of the "wapentake" as the child bought from James II.,—for he is an old comprachico who has languished in prison for fifteen years; and forthwith the Sheriff humbly bows the mountebank into his own chair. "My lord, will your lordship deign to sit down." The clue to Lord Clancharlie's birth has been committed to the waves in a sealed flask; it has tossed there for fifteen years; at last it has been picked up and opened at the Admiralty; or, to use the flowery language of the Sheriff, "Just as the mountain Harrow is excellent for grain, and furnishes the fine wheat-flour of which the bread for the royal table is baked, so does the sea render to England all the services that it can, and, when a lord is lost, it finds him and brings him back." The wretch under the stones at length confesses: whereupon the Sheriff orders him to be released from the load, and "remit to the good pleasure of her majesty, to be hanged as a plagiary." "Plagiary," strikes in the echoing lawyer, with a final burst of recondite lore, "that is to say, buyer and seller of children; Visigoth Law, book seven, title three, paragraph Usurpaverit; and Salic Law, title forty-one, paragraph two; and Frison Law, title twenty-one, De Plagio. And Alexander Nequam says, 'Qui pueros vendis plagiarius est tibi nomen.' " The prisoner is ordered to rise and thank her majesty for her clemency, but he is found to be dead. "No matter," says the Sheriff, daintily handling his bunch of roses. "After making confession, to live or to die is a mere formality." Here we leave the penal cellar; but first let us learn the lesson M. Hugo reads. All that he narrates, it seems,—

"Was at that time frequently practised in England, and might strictly in a criminal procedure be executed thereto at this day; for all those laws still exist. England offers the curious spectacle of a barbarous code living on good terms with liberty. The household economy, let us admit, is excellent. Some distrust, for all that, would not be unwise. If a crisis occurred, a penal re-awakening is not impossible. English legislation is a tamed tiger, it puts forth a velvet paw, but it has always its claws. . . . In England the laws are so much venerated that they are never abrogated; but people get out of that veneration by not executing them."

Case in point,—for M. Victor Hugo is careful to furnish himself with modern instances: "The Norman custom is very much wrinkled,"—he has compared old laws to old ladies, who are not killed off because they are old; "that does not prevent an English judge from still casting fond glances at it. An atrocious bit of old lumber, if it is Norman, is still lovingly preserved. What is more ferocious than the gallows? In 1867 a man,"—"the Fenian Burke," as a note informs us,—"has been condemned to be cut into four quarters, to be offered to a woman, the Queen." We need not recall to

mind how purely formal was the sentence of quartering then pronounced, or how much the country was horrified to find that it was still possible to pronounce it; nor need we notice the rude misconception of the words of the sentence that form the ground of M. Victor Hugo's remark on her Majesty's part in that merely verbal atrocity. He goes on to say, ironically, that for all this the torture has never existed in England, if history is to be believed; and cites Matthew of Westminster,—some five centuries old,—and the Saxon law,—some five centuries older still,—as evidence that torture was practised in England in 1705, and might be in 1869!

More than enough has been said to show that "*L'Homme Qui Rit*" is not the faithful representation of England which its gifted author no doubt meant to make it; and yet we have taken only a few striking instances of error, confusion, and reckless fancifulness. Minor examples might be found by scores. Daniel Defoe is sent to the Pillory in 1702, not for the "*Short Way with Dissenters*," but for merely printing the names of the members who had spoken in the House of Commons on the previous evening. Alicia Lisle, beheaded after the Monmouth rebellion, becomes "*Lady Lyle*." The Lord Chancellor in 1705 is William Lord Cowper; whereas Sir William Cowper only became lord keeper months after the date assigned, was not raised to the peerage till 1706, nor to the woolsack till 1707. In 1705 there were peers of "*the United Kingdom of Great Britain*"; the union with Scotland dating two years later. In 1700 tea had become so favourite and so cheap that the tea-pot daily adorned the breakfast-table in a mountebank's booth, and prize-fighters were trained on the comparatively novel beverage, to which even Pepys was almost a stranger. But these random and minor examples must suffice; and over the innumerable misspellings,—such as "*goal delivery*,"—we pass in silence. The purpose of this paper is not to review "*L'Homme Qui Rit*," and the story, interwoven with M. Hugo's delineations of English life, learning, and law, has been touched as little as possible. It displays vast and daring inventiveness, contains many vivid and fascinating descriptions, and, in another framework, might have amply maintained the author's fame. But, by so much as the power of the book and the genius of the writer will command favour and credence for "*L'Homme Qui Rit*" among our neighbours, by so much is it necessary that an emphatic protest against its trustworthiness as a study of the "*phenomenon of the English nobility*," or, for that matter, any other English phenomenon, should be entered. The grounds of that protest have been set forth by full and fair examples; so that Englishmen who have not read "*L'Homme Qui Rit*" in the form under which it has gone forth to the French public, may know that they "*speak by the book*" when they affirm that M. Victor Hugo has caricatured the England of the past, and, by no obscure implication, calumniated the England of the present.

GOLDONI:

AND LIFE IN ITALY A HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS SINCE.

ONE of the most curious of the diversities which constitute national character, is that which causes the change, that all societies undergo by lapse of time, to be more marked among one people in one department of their lives, and among their neighbours in a different department. That human life in some of its phases is stagnant, and scarcely moves or changes at all, we know ; and that the rapidity of its movement is proportioned to the degree of civilisation which it has attained, we are disposed,—thus far, at least, in the world's history,—to believe. We are accordingly, and not unreasonably, wont to assume that the last hundred years has seen greater changes in our own social condition, than in that of any other nation. Italy, on the other hand, as all the rest of Europe asserts, and as she herself admits, has lagged sadly during these latter centuries in the rear of the general progress of the civilised world. And in accordance with the above-stated notions, we are apt to figure to ourselves,—the striking changes of the last few years apart,—that Italy is a very unchanged country ; that social ways and customs and the habits of life are very much what they were a few generations ago ; or, at least, that they are more like what they were then, than would be found to be the case elsewhere. Nevertheless, the fact is, that the general shape and manner of life,—more especially of that portion of the national life which belongs to what is usually called “society,” in the more restricted sense of the term,—has been fully as much altered during the last century, or century and a half, in Italy, as in any other part of Europe.

But the change shows itself to the south of the Alps most markedly in a different part of the vast and varied field of human life, from that in which it is mainly to be noticed among ourselves. There the changes to be noticed are changes of external habit ;—with us they are changes in internal modes of thought. With us men think on all the most important subjects of life and human conduct very differently from what they used to think a hundred years or so ago. In Italy, on most of these subjects, men think much as they did in the eighteenth century. At first sight it may seem, perhaps, that this assertion is not in accordance with sundry notorious facts in recent Italian history. The utterance of opinions on matters political and religious which were never, or scarcely ever, heard in former days, may be heard loudly enough now on every side. But in the first

place the non-utterance of opinions was in the old days no proof of their non-existence ; and in the second place the opinions professed by a man on the subjects which most prominently occupy the national talk, may, experience teaches us, vary very considerably without necessarily implying any great real change in the national mind. In the habits of thought, and ways of looking at things, and in those unconscious modifications of the mind, which are sucked in, so to speak, with the mother's milk, which lie deeper down in the mind than the opinions which a man forms consciously to himself, and which underlie the processes by which he sets about forming what he calls his opinions,—in all this the national mind of Italy is little changed.

That the English mind has, in these respects, become changed radically and profoundly, few Englishmen, probably, would be found to doubt.

The same difference between the two natures has manifested itself throughout the course of history. The detailed exposition of this would be a subject for a volume ;—and not a bad one. But the most striking instances of the fact may be recalled to the reader of history in a very few words. How profoundly Christianity changed us English, we all know. How little it changed the Italians, those know who are acquainted with Italian manners and Italian history. How deeply and efficiently the Reformation modified us again, we all know. How lightly and inefficiently it touched Italy is also matter of historical commonplace. The far-reaching consequences of the great up-heaving of the last quarter of the last century, are still producing profound modifications of even national character among us, who were not primarily affected by the great earthquake. Italy, which was materially knocked to pieces, and turned over and over by it, continued after the storm to think and feel, in all those matters which really go to the making of national character, much as she thought and felt before.

Very interesting and far-reaching speculations might be based on these phenomena, as to the invariability of human species, and as to the future prospects and destinies of different sections of the European family. But leaving speculation to the thoughtful reader, it is our present purpose, having thus briefly indicated to him the amusement he may find from the comparisons we have referred to, merely to place before him a picture of the social changes which have come over Italy and Italian life since the middle of the eighteenth century. And it would be difficult to find, or even to imagine, a better text-book for this purpose than the autobiography of the man whose name we have placed at the head of this paper.

Carlo Goldoni was born at Venice in 1707. His father, a physician of some reputation, was the son of a Modenese, settled at Venice, in the service of the Republic. Carlo, after some hesitations and changes of purpose, took his degree of doctor of law at the University of

Padua, as the necessary preliminary for practising as an advocate at Venice. He commenced his career at the Venetian bar under favourable auspices, and seemed to be making his way fairly. But old temptations and preferences assailed, and got the better of him, and he deserted his "studio"—his chambers, as we should say,—to become a writer for the theatre. Finding himself at Pisa, after some years of adventures, friends there persuaded him to open a "studio," and seek for employment as an advocate in that city. His Paduan degree made him competent to do so. Here again his success as a barrister was considerable. He quickly had as much business as he could do. But once again a company of players and an enterprising "impresario" crossed his path, and tempted him; so shutting up his "studio," he said good-bye to Pisa, and once more returned for good and all to his veritable calling of a dramatic author. His works, published in 1821, at Prato, in thirty volumes, contain a hundred and twenty dramas, some in the Venetian dialect, some in Italian, some in prose, and some in verse. He really produced, however, many more, probably altogether about two hundred. In the year 1761, the fifty-fourth of his age, he went to Paris, where he passed the remainder of his life; and in his eightieth year published his autobiography, added in three volumes to the Prato edition of his works.

This story of his life has all the charm which such narratives rarely fail to possess, when they have in so eminent a degree as these memoirs of Goldoni the qualities of unaffected simplicity and evident truthfulness. They are too long by more than half. Doubtless they were not too long for the day in which they were written. They had a great success, and the memory of them is yet fresh among the lovers of such books. But they are too long for the present generation. People are too busy, and have too much to cram into their lives to spare the time to read three volumes of memoirs of Goldoni. Possibly, however, the reader may be induced to give a few minutes to such an account of Goldoni and his day in Italy as can be put into the compass of a magazine article.

The death in 1712 of his grandfather, who had held a lucrative position under the Venetian government and who had kept up a very handsome establishment, inhabiting a villa six leagues from Venice, let to him by the Duke of Massa, where he had constantly dramatic and operatic artists in his pay, and received habitually all the gayest and most brilliant society of the capital, made a great change in the position of his family. The pleasure-loving old gentleman seems to have left his affairs in great disorder. The family were reduced to "the most embarrassing straits," and "to complete our misfortunes, my mother gave birth to a second son." Under these untoward circumstances our hero's father, "who did not like the contemplation of painful thoughts," determined on leaving his wife

and children to get on as well as they could at Venice, and taking a journey to Rome "to distract his thoughts."

At this time, it would seem that he,—Giulio Goldoni, the author's father,—had never thought of doing anything for his livelihood. But at Rome, a friend and compatriot introduced him to Lancisi, first physician and chamberlain to Clement XI. This gentleman took a fancy to him, and advised him to turn his attention to medicine. "My father consented, pursued his studies in the College of the Sapienza, practised at the hospital of Santo Spirito, and received his degree of doctor at the end of four years, upon which his Mecenas sent him to begin the exercise of his profession at Perugia."

And he did exercise his profession at Perugia, making friends with several of the leading nobles of the place, seeing that "he was," as his son tells us, "perhaps a good physician, but certainly a very pleasant companion." Settled thus at Perugia, and at once taking, as it would seem, the first practice there, by virtue of his Roman diploma and his four years of preparation, Giulio Goldoni wrote to Venice to call, not his wife, but his son, now some ten years old, to join him at the city of his adoption. The poor wife resists, weeps, yields; and an abbate, a friend of the family, is found, who is going to Rome, and who promises to drop little Carlo at Perugia by the way. They embark for Rimini, and, landing there, have to perform the rest of the journey on horseback, to the infinite terror and distress of the young Goldoni, who "had seen horses in his infancy," and who was dreadfully afraid of them, deeming them a ferocious kind of wild beasts. "They took me by the girdle, and tossed me into the saddle! Merciful Heaven! Boots! bridle! spurs! whip! What was I to do with all that? I was tossed about like a sack! The reverend father laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks. The servants mocked me, and I could not help laughing at it all myself!"

He joins his father at Perugia, and is sent by him to the Jesuits' College to complete his education, while his father continues to practise in the city. There Goldoni completed the three years' course of "grammar," "humanities," and "rhetoric," which constituted the recognised curriculum; and then his father's principal "protector," the Marchese Antinori, having died about the same time, and various mortifications having thereupon arisen, in consequence of the medical men of Perugia looking upon the "foreign" physician with no favourable eyes, it was determined that the Signora Goldoni and her second son should be summoned from Venice, and that the whole family should proceed together to Rimini. Giulio Goldoni destined his son to the profession of medicine, and it became, therefore, necessary that he should now study "philosophy." And as the Dominicans had a school at Rimini famous for logic, "which opens the road to all the sciences, physical as well as speculative," it was decided that Carlo should be left a boarder in the house of a Venetian banker, a friend

of his father's, for the purpose of studying logic under the reverend fathers, while the rest of the family went to establish themselves at Chiozzo, where Giulio Goldoni, apparently without any difficulty, began to practise, and found himself at once surrounded by a numerous circle of patients.

This rapid and easy breaking off and recommencement of a career, the nature of which, according to our notions, requires, more than almost any other, time, and that connection which is only attained by time, occurs two or three times in the history of Giulio Goldoni's career, as related by his son. How came it that a stranger,—a "foreigner," as he would then be considered,—and one whose medical abilities, if we may judge by the nature of his preparatory studies, could not have been such as to conciliate any great degree of legitimate confidence, was able to pitch his tent thus suddenly in a city quite new to him, and forthwith find a satisfactory "clientèle?" May not some explanation of what seems to us so strange be found in the spectacle still to be witnessed in Italian cities, of the "ciarlatano,"—the travelling quack, who arrives with sound of trumpet, stations his carriage or caravan, turned into a stage, on the principal piazza of the city, and announcing the wonders of his art with stentorian lungs, and no despicable amount of genuine eloquence, does a stroke of business among the crowd which he never fails to attract, which the regular practitioners of the place could not equal? May not the required explanation be also assisted by the common and curious use of the word "peregrino?" "Peregrino," it is hardly necessary to say, means "foreign,"—"coming from a distance,"—the original of our word "pilgrim." But it is to this day constantly used, in Italy, to mean "excellent,"—"exquisite." The goods, of whatever sort they may be, that come from afar are presumed to be better than the home product; and the same rule, in the dense darkness of the general ignorance, was deemed applicable to the practitioners of the healing art.

Young Carlo is consigned, meanwhile, to the care of the reverend Dominican Father Cardini,—"a kind, wise, and learned man,—of much merit, indeed, but a thorough-going Tomist, incapable of leaving his old ruts." "This celebrated man bored me to death. His digressions, his scholastic subtleties, and his 'barbaras' and 'baraliptons,' seemed to me useless and ridiculous." "There were many," he adds naïvely, "who thought as I did; but modern philosophy had not at that day made the notable progress that it has since accomplished."

Being thus bored by his Dominican instructors, he sought to compensate himself by frequenting the theatre, just then opened by a recently-arrived company of players, and at his first visit discovered that they were Venetians,—compatriots in a foreign land! In a very short time he had become intimate with the whole troop, and was

at home behind the scenes. One Friday,—a holiday for the players throughout all Italy, except Venice,—the whole troop go on a picnicing excursion into the country, and Goldoni goes with them. Upon that occasion he learns that the company is to leave Rimini that day week,—that a boat has already been engaged to convey them to Chiozzo. “Chiozzo!” exclaims Goldoni; “my mother is there, and I should so much like to go and see her!”—“Come with us!” one and all the troop cried in chorus; “yes, yes, come with us! Come with us! In our boat you'll do capitally! You will have nothing to pay. We shall eat and drink, and laugh and sing, and play cards and amuse ourselves!”

“How was it possible to resist such a programme, and miss such an opportunity!” says Goldoni, writing at eighty.

He went to his lodgings to consult the friends in whose care he had been left. They would not hear of such an escapade. The young scapegrace pretends to submit to what is said to him; but on the day named for the departure, gets up very early, steals down to the port, and hides himself on board the actors' boat.

Presently the troop come down to embark. And where is Signor Goldoni? At the last moment our hero creeps out from his hiding-place! Ecco Signor Goldoni! Universal hurrah, and laughter! amid which the anchor is heaved and sail hoisted. “Twelve actors and actresses, a prompter, a machinist, a property-man, eight servants, four dressers, two nurses, children of every age, dogs, cats, monkeys, parrots, singing birds, pigeons, and a pet lamb! A veritable Noah's ark!” says our author, who thus goes on to describe his voyage;

“The boat being very large there were many compartments, and every woman had her own little crib shut off by curtains. A good bed had been prepared for me alongside the ‘impresario,’ and every one was well placed. The general manager of the voyage, who was at the same time cook and keeper of the wine department, rang a bell, which was the signal for breakfast. We all assembled in a sort of saloon contrived in the middle of the boat upon a floor of boxes, bales, and baggage, and there, on an oval table, we found coffee, tea, milk, roast meat, wine, and water. The ‘prima donna’ wanted broth; but there was none for her! Thereupon she goes into a fury, and we had much ado to pacify her with a cup of chocolate. She was the least good-looking woman on board, and the most difficult to content! After breakfast cards were proposed, to pass the time till dinner. And a game of ‘three sevens,’ and another of picquet, were about to begin, when a faro table, established on the roof of the boat, attracted everybody. The bank showed that pastime, rather than any real gambling, was intended; nor, indeed, would our ‘impresario’ have permitted it, had it been otherwise. We played, we laughed, we jested, and joked each other. But, hark! there's the bell for dinner, and all rush down!

"Maccaroni! All fling themselves upon it, and devour three tureens full,—bœuf à-la-mode,—cold fowl,—loin of veal,—dessert,—excellent wine! Ah! what a good dinner! Ah! what appetite!"

"We remained three hours at table. There was playing on several different instruments, and much singing. The 'first chambermaid' sang admirably well. I looked at her attentively, and she produced a singular impression on me. But all on a sudden an accident happened that disturbed all the enjoyment of the party. A cat, the pet of the 'prima donna,' escaped from its basket! She calls all hands to her assistance; and we all ran after the fugitive. But the cat, which was as untamed as its mistress, bolted, and sprang, and leaped; and finally ran up the mast. A sailor goes up to capture the beast, and the cat springs into the sea and there remains. Thereupon our 'prima donna' is in despair. She wants to make a general slaughter of all the other animals on board. She threatens to throw her maid into the tomb of her beloved pet. Everybody takes the maid's part, and the hubbub is general. The 'impresario' comes upon the scene, and laughs heartily; jokes, and caresses the afflicted lady, who finally begins to laugh herself;—and puss is forgotten!"

"But enough of this nonsense," exclaims Goldoni, writing at four-score. Nevertheless, he remembers that "our voyage lasted four days, and it was all the time the same amusements, the same pleasures, the same appetite."

Signora Goldoni was delighted to see her son, and perfectly ready to thank the "impresario" for having brought him to her. And Carlo had not much more difficulty in persuading his father to forgive his irregular manner of quitting the Dominican Tomists. It was perhaps the more easy from the circumstance that the father had obtained from the Marchese Goldoni, of Milan, a connection of the family, a promise for Carlo of a "borsa,"—a scholarship, as we should say, at the "Collegio Ghislieri," founded by the Pope of that name in the University of Pavia.

Carlo and his father go at the proper time to Pavia, and there find, for the first time, that sundry conditions must be fulfilled by the candidate for a scholarship in the Collegio Ghislieri. Many documents, attestations, and certificates are needed, none of all which have been so much as thought of by the careless Venetian. Among other things, it is necessary that a candidate shall be of the full age of eighteen years; whereas our Carlo is only sixteen. However, all these difficulties are got over by a little ingenuity and good interest,—even the last, which seemed the most formidable. "What saint it was that did the miracle, I do not know," says he; "but this I know well, that one night I went to bed sixteen years old only, and got up the next morning eighteen!"

Here are a few words which give a lively picture of the university life at Pavia.

"In this college the board was good, and the lodging superlatively good. We had liberty to go out for the purpose of going to the university; and we went about in every part of the town. The rule required us to go out two-and-two, and to return to the college in the same fashion. We, however, were wont to part company at the first street corner, and to settle with our comrades a place of meeting, for the purpose of returning to college according to rule. But even if we came in alone the porter took no notice of it, and did not report us. This place of porter was worth to him as much as that of a minister of state's usher. We were well dressed, with all the elegance of the young Abbati who frequent 'conversazioni,'—English cloth, French silk, embroidery, and galon. Our outer garment was a species of gown without sleeves, with a pendant of velvet hanging from the left shoulder, with the Ghislieri arms embroidered on it in gold and silver, surmounted by the apostolic tiara, and the keys of St. Peter. This gown, called a 'sovran,' is the uniform of the college, and gives the scholars an air of importance. We were by no means a company of schoolboys. We did precisely what we pleased. There was much dissipation in the college, and much liberty beyond the walls. There I learned fencing, dancing, music, drawing, and every imaginable game of hazard. These last were forbidden, but we played all the same, and the game of 'formiera' cost me dear. When we went out we steered clear of the university, and used to haunt the pleasantest houses in the town. In Pavia the scholars are regarded much as the officers are in a garrison town. The men detest them,—the women receive them!"

When the beginning of the vacation had come, two Venetians, with whom he had become acquainted by chance,—the secretary and the "maestro di casa" of the Venetian minister resident at Milan,—having occasion to go to Venice, asked Goldoni to accompany them. The journey was to be made by boat on the Ticino and the Po.

"It is impossible to imagine anything more convenient and elegant than the boat which had been sent from Venice for this purpose. It consisted of a saloon and another contiguous chamber, covered by a balustraded deck on the top of them, and adorned with mirrors, pictures, carvings, and sofas, in the most commodious fashion. It was very different from the actors' boat at Rimini. We were ten masters on board, and many servants; and there were beds under the prow and under the stern. But our plan was to voyage only by day, and take up our quarters in good inns at night; and where there were none, to ask hospitality of the Benedictines, who possess immense estates on the banks of the Po. All the members of our party played on some instrument. There were three violins, a violincello, two hautboys, a horn, and a guitar. I only was good for

nothing, and was ashamed to be so. To make up, however, for my uselessness in any other way, I occupied myself every morning in putting in verse,—good or bad,—the events of the previous day. This notion diverted my companions immensely, and was our amusement after our coffee. Our favourite occupation was music. In the evening we all sat upon the deck, and thence filled the air with harmony. We reached Cremona about six in the evening. Our approach had already been rumoured in the city, and the banks of the river were crowded with people on the look-out for us, who received us with all the honours. They took us at once to a magnificent villa at the outskirts of the city, where we gave a concert, with the aid of many musicians of the place. Then we had a grand supper, and danced all night, not returning to our boat till the first rays of the rising sun surprised us. It was a repetition of the same thing at other places,—at Le Bottrige in the house of the Marchese Tassoni. And thus amid laughter, play, and amusement, we arrived at Chiozzo, where I had to separate from the pleasantest party in the world."

Impossible to have a picture of Italian life in the eighteenth century more graphic or more full of local colouring! But the stranger would be signally disappointed who should embark on the Po with the expectation of meeting any such festive travellers in these latter days. The people have undergone no change in character,—as yet,—which would make them less enjoy such a voyage, or prevent them from entering into the spirit of the party with equally ready good humour. But the Juggernaut car of nineteenth-century progress drives them. People go from Pavia to Venice in as few hours as our holiday-making travellers took days. The railroad has abolished all such pleasant loitering. Life is less easy. Even in Italy men cannot spare idle days uncounting them. Besides, doubt as to political partisanship would interfere with such easy-going chance familiarity.

Here, as elsewhere, on the banks of the Po, as on other banks, national progress does certainly seem to show itself, as far as it has yet advanced, to be sadly incompatible with cakes and ale. Any Italian man may now think to any extent that his intellect will permit him on any of the greatest subjects that can exercise the human intelligence, and may speak aloud the result of his thinking. No one of that pleasant eighteenth-century party on the Po could have dared to breathe the faintest doubt as to the absolute truth of all the officially-received doctrines and dogmas of Church and State. But then no one of them had the smallest desire to occupy his mind with any such subjects, or the smallest suspicion that his life was the less worth having because he might not do so.

But the general easy-going festal life, of which the above little picture is so lively a specimen, is also rendered less possible by the mere increase of numbers, and especially by the increase of that portion of the nation which expects to share in the life-banquet of

society's high table. There were cakes and ale, after a sort, below the salt in those days; but the number has been greatly increased, and is rapidly increasing, of those who are no longer contented to sit below the salt. And this all those who are believers in the virtue of progress at all, must, if they are true to their flag, admit to be good.

There is, however, one truth,—an indubitable one, we take it to be, to all those who know Italy well,—which it is worth while to mention, *obiter*, for the consideration of English sociologists. In lagging, backward, idle Italy, those who have been condemned to sit below the salt at life's banquet, have not been so thrust out from the table altogether as they have been in progressive England. There exist no such masses of misery and destitution in Italy as may be found both in our cities and in our agricultural districts. Nay, despite the general low level of education, and the beggarly account given by statistics in the matters of reading and writing, there are not to be found in Italy such masses of utterly degraded and uncultivated ruffianism as may be pointed to in favoured England. We should like to lay before the English reader a little in detail such an account of some of the features of Italian agricultural life, as would show that, however much the systems in vogue may be little calculated to promote agricultural progress, or to obtain for the owner of the land as large a portion of the produce of it as the English landlord obtains, these systems do favour the well-being of the cultivator and the peasant class. But any attempt to do this here would lead us too far away from the proper subject of this paper.

When Goldoni returned to Pavia to complete his course of three years, the ill-will of the citizens towards the students had come to a crisis. A large number of men belonging to the leading families in the city had signed a paper, by which they bound themselves to offer marriage to no girl belonging to a house in which the students were received. The result was that Pavia became a very much less agreeable residence for the collegians than they had previously found it. And great was the resentment produced. In this state of things Goldoni was induced by some of his fellow-students to compose a satire on the leaders among their enemies. They got the manuscript from him, and traitorously caused copies to be made of it, which they circulated through the city under circumstances which rendered it easy to recognise him as the author. The fury which was occasioned seems to have been far beyond anything which English people could anticipate or understand as produced by such a cause. Several families banded themselves together in a vow to take the life of this schoolboy, guilty of having written a few libellous verses. If it had not been that he had already been placed under arrest within the College walls, he would in all probability have been murdered. The whole city was in turmoil. The prefect, who was absent at the moment, was sent for in haste. The governor was summoned from

Milan. Had it not been that the Collegio Ghislieri was a privileged place, the unlucky satirist would have been sent to prison as a criminal. As it was, he was expelled from College, despite the intercession of the Bishop, who would fain have saved him.

He was sent home on board a salt barge, which was bound down the Po to Venice, and found the journey a very different one from that above described. The bursar of the college, who had conducted him on board, and consigned him to the care of the captain, put thirty pauls,—equal to about fifteen francs,—into his hand, for his expenses, and left him. He found himself so miserable, what with the dread of meeting his father and the discomfort of the mode of conveyance, that when the boat stopped at Piacenza he had resolved to run away. But the captain, who had had his orders with reference to such a possibility, would not allow him to leave the boat. While he was lying on his bed that evening in great misery and dejection, another passenger came on board,—a Jesuit priest. This worthy man went to work to comfort him,—drew all his lamentable story from him,—spoke to him with such unction and eloquence as to persuade him that the only means of recovering his peace of mind was to confess himself fully and receive absolution,—which the poor boy did, and suffered his spiritual consoler to extract from him his thirty pauls as penance! The next day he wanted again,—in the absolute absence of any possible occupation or amusement,—to apply to the reverend father for ghostly instruction and comfort; but the worthy Jesuit had no longer any leisure or attention to bestow upon him.

Thus thrown back upon his parents' hands, and without occupation, he soon succeeded in getting employed as an assistant in the office of one of the Venetian governors sent out to govern the various cities of the Venetian territory. In this capacity he was sent into Friuli, where he seems to have discharged the duties of his office satisfactorily. All work in those days, however, seems to have been compatible with a very large allowance of play. Here is his account of the way in which a bit of official duty was performed:—"A 'processo verbale' had to be made ten leagues away from the city about an affray that had taken place. As the country in the direction in question was a plain, the road through which is lined all along with the most charming country houses, I engaged several of my friends to accompany me. We were a party of twelve,—six women and six men, and four servants. Every one was on horseback, and we spent twelve days in this agreeable expedition. In all that time we never dined or supped twice in the same place, nor did we pass one of the twelve nights in bed. Very often we walked on foot among the clustering vines and shady fig-trees, breakfasting on milk, or on the daily food of the peasants; that is to say, cakes made from maize, together with some savoury roast. Wherever we came we were received with festivity, and banquets, and merriment. Wherever we arrived at

night there was a ball, which lasted all night, and the ladies of our party did their parts as well as the men. Among the party were two sisters, one married and one single. The latter pleased me much; and, in fact, it was for her sake that I had arranged this party. She was as prudent and modest as her sister was wild. The nature of our excursion gave us many opportunities of revealing our sentiments to each other, so that we became lovers. My 'processo' was knocked off in a couple of hours. And then we returned by a different road, in order to vary our amusement. But on arriving at Feltri,—the city in which he was employed,—"we were all knocked up and utterly worn out, so that I felt it for a month afterwards, and my poor Angelica had a forty days' fever."

The end of the story of the loves of Carlo and Angelica must be given in the author's own words. Surely it is one of the most extraordinary confessions that any man ever made. No man of Anglo-Saxon race, we imagine, could read it without feeling the intimate conviction that no fellow-creature of his own stock could ever have so felt, reasoned, and confessed. One of the profoundest differences between the Teuton and the Latin races is to be found in the different nature of their relations to and manner of regarding the other sex. And here is a specimen of that difference very curious in its significance:—

"The poor girl,—Angelica,—loved me tenderly," he goes on to say, "and with perfect confidence. I also loved her with my whole soul, and may say that she was the first whom I had ever truly loved. She aspired to become my wife; and would really have become such, if certain special well-founded reflections had not dissuaded me from marrying her. Her elder sister had been a woman of rare beauty, and lost it after her first confinements. The younger sister had the same complexion, the same lineaments; and was one of those delicate beauties that fade from the mere effect of the air, and which suffer from the least irregularity. I had a clear proof of it. The fatigue of the journey we had made together had immensely changed her. I was young; and if my wife had after some time lost the freshness of her beauty, I foresaw how great would be my despair." And this from a man in love, as he, poor creature, in the depth of his absolute incapacity to conceive the meaning of the word, describes himself! But it is unfair to say that he so describes himself. He tells us that he was "amante." But let all the dictionaries say what they will, "amore" does not mean the same thing as "love."

After awhile Goldoni's mother became discontented with the itinerant sort of life to which the nature of the employment her son had adopted constrained him; and when he lost his father, which occurred when Carlo was twenty-four years of age, she persuaded her son to settle himself as an advocate in Venice. But for this purpose it was necessary that he should take the degree of Doctor of Law in the

University of Padua. A course of five years' study in the University was needed for the due taking of this degree. But difficulties of this sort could not bar the progress of him who had gone to bed sixteen, and waked the next morning with the eighteen years needed for his holding a scholarship in Pope Ghislieri's College. There was an old law or custom to the effect that "foreigners," if otherwise competent, might be admitted to the degree of Doctor of Law without residence. Carlo Goldoni was born at Venice, as his father had been before him. But his grandfather had come from Modena. And by virtue of this fact a letter was obtained from the secretary of the Duke of Modena, recognising Carlo Goldoni as a subject of the Duke, and a "foreigner" at Venice; and therefore entitled to his degree without residence. So he went up to Padua with his tutor, a Venetian lawyer with whom he had been reading for a few months, and they both passed the whole night at cards, and lost all their money. Nevertheless, the young candidate went up the next day and had to improvise a dissertation on the law respecting the property of persons dying intestate, and another on the law of bigamy, before the assembled University. He was not a little alarmed at the ordeal before him. But his proposer,—a Doctor of the University who is selected by the friends of the candidate to act as a sort of godfather,—whispered to him at the last moment there was nothing to fear; that all this was mere form; and that one must be monstrously ignorant indeed to be refused the laurel in the University of Padua. Accordingly he put into academic form, as well as he could, all that he had ever heard about bigamy and intestate persons; and was adjudged the laurel, "nemine penitus penitusque discrepante." A characteristic incident had predisposed the learned assembly in his favour. He made a blunder in citing some author. His proposer prompted him. Now, there was, it seems, a certain severe and morose old disciplinarian there among the doctors who, overhearing this prompt, got up, and said that all prompting was forbidden; that he protested against it, and begged that it might not occur again. And this outbreak, Goldoni tells us, was thought to be so unduly severe, in such bad taste, and such an innovation, that it disposed them all in his favour. Returning in triumph to Venice, he was at once accepted as a member of the Venetian bar, and almost immediately had a fair share of practice. He soon, however, renewed his acquaintance with the players, and is found writing for them in various ways, working very hard to prevent such employment from encroaching on the hours due to his "studio."

Already he had conceived that reform of the theatre, which is the really great work for which Italy has to feel gratitude to his memory. Comedy in Italy, at the time when Goldoni began to write, was exclusively the "comedia a braccia," as it was called. That is to say, a certain well-known set of masked figures,—pantaloons, harlequin, columbine, and the rest of them,—presented some fable, having

more or less right to the title of comedy, each actor always sustaining parts of the same character, while the author merely furnished the skeleton of the fable, the dialogue of which the actors were to supply, as their own talent might give them utterance at the moment. It will be observed at once how clearly this state of dramatic art was a stage of progress from the representations of a street *Punch*, whose Italian nationality and ancestry we all know, to those of modern comedy. To cause the "comedia di arte,"—that is, a drama in which the whole dialogue is furnished by the author, and in which the performers do not wear masks,—to supersede the "comedia a braccia," was the great work of Goldoni's life, in which he was completely successful. It was in no small degree up-hill work at first; for actors capable of sustaining unmasked the characters imagined for them, and assigned to them by an author, were rare; and the public was by no means altogether favourable to the change. Before half Goldoni's course was run, however, the change had been completely made. It needed a writer of his wonderful fertility to accomplish such a change in such a time. And at the same time that extraordinary amount of production arose from, and was only rendered possible by, the circumstance that Goldoni's theatre was the first step of progress in advance of the old *harlequinades*. Upon one occasion he undertook to supply a theatre with sixteen new pieces in the course of a year, and kept his engagement. It cannot be denied that, marvellous as such industry must appear in any case, a perusal of the pieces in question is calculated to lessen one's surprise at it.

We have not, however, yet reached the time when he finally accepted the profession of a dramatic writer as his sole and acknowledged business in life.

His twofold career at Venice, as a barrister and as a playwright, was brought to a sudden termination by a matrimonial "difficulty" in which he involved himself. He made acquaintance with a family of ladies, in which there were a maiden aunt and a niece. He seems to have made love to both, and to have changed his mind as to which of them he really wished to marry, making one lady furious by the change, and then uniting their forces against him by finally making up his mind that he would not have anything to say to either of them. There were two ways in which such conduct might be avenged,—the knife and the law! And to escape from the twofold danger, our hero determined on flight;—shut up his "studio," abandoned his career, and went off with the world before him, as light in heart and baggage as Sterne with his black satin breeches! He found his way to Milan; read to a company of opera singers there a piece which he had composed for an opera; and was made to understand, by their criticisms and objections, that his work was good for nothing,—a curious and most characteristic scene, which, unhappily, the tyrant necessities of space and time will not permit us to give the

reader. Then, having absolutely no resource before him, he called upon the Venetian envoy resident at Milan, had a conversation with the great man while the latter was dressing himself, and at the end of it accepted a position in the minister's household as "gentiluomo di camera!"—so brought his light portmanteau, and was installed at once in his new quarters.

The strange ease with which such positions are found, and such arrangements made, seems to a reader of these and other memoirs of the time to be one of the most curious characteristics of the time and clime. *Gentiluomo di camera!* What did it mean? Genteel hanger-on! There were so many styles and titles invented for the enabling of poor men, who had received liberal educations, as education then went, to live in dependence on rich men! All the framework of society seems to have been shaped with a view to the providing of bread for a large class who would not dig, and were ashamed to beg save in certain recognised guises.

In the case of Goldoni, however, it shortly came to pass that his position was by no means either a sinecure or a subordinate one. The minister and his secretary did not get on well together. And very soon Goldoni found himself discharging all the functions of Secretary of Legation. And all went on pleasantly enough, till everything was put an end to by the breaking out of war in 1733. The rights of Don Carlos were to be sustained by the arms of Spain, France, and Sardinia, against the House of Austria; and the whole of the north of Italy became the theatre of war.

Goldoni and his master were driven from Milan, and betook themselves to Crema. In that city there was another diplomatic agent of Venice, and much rivalry arose between the two as to the amount and importance of the intelligence they were able to send to the Republic from the seat of war. Upon one occasion Goldoni was entrusted with some important papers to copy, with directions to return them to the minister the next morning. Our hero worked hard, finished his task, locked all up in his desk, and went out to play at cards all night in a house of no very good repute! He had imagined that the minister would not be ready to see him till nine or ten o'clock. But at five the great man sent for him; could not find him; became furiously angry; and took it into his head that Goldoni had been to sell the important intelligence to the rival envoy. Furious accusations! Indignant protestations! A complete rupture! Presently, however, the minister discovered by chance how and where Goldoni had passed the night, and would fain have made up the quarrel. But our hero had been too deeply offended, and left his patron, to wander forth into the world once more with no sort of settled plan before him.

And, moreover, the world into which he thus wandered forth was all convulsed by war. Before long, however, he was again writing comedies successfully at Venice. His engagements with the come-

dians took him to Genoa, where, at a very short notice, he married the daughter of a notary, whose face, seen at an opposite window, had pleased him. And a very good wife,—a much better than he seems to have deserved,—she appears to have been to him.

Then his Genoese connection led to his being made Consul for the Republic of Genoa at Venice. On receiving this appointment, he took a handsome apartment, and began housekeeping on a corresponding scale in a style calculated to do honour to the State he represented; and was, at the same time, zealously active on sundry occasions which presented themselves, to protect the interests and maintain the rights of the Ligurian Republic; all which was rewarded by the distinguished approbation of the Genoese Senate, which continued to be manifested in a manner most agreeable to all parties, till towards the end of the year, on some little reference to that part of the matter on the part of the zealous Consul, it appeared that the "superb" Republic had not the slightest idea of attaching any salary to the office which had been so graciously bestowed upon him.

Here was a mighty fall! Nothing for it but once again to shut up house, cut moorings, and go again adrift,—this time with a wife,—into a world still tossing and tumbling in the throes of war.

It is a pity that we have no space left on the present occasion to give some picture of his war-tossed adventures. War was a very different sort of thing at that period from what it has become in our hurrying, business-like days. It was half-play in those times of cakes and ale to the actors,—though in no wise play at all, indeed, to the tillers of the earth, and drawers of water, and hewers of wood! But then they did not want any more than the beasts of the field! Above all, there was no hurry about the matter. Campaign and winter quarters seemed as much a part of Nature's ordinances as harvest time and seed time.

In the course of his war wanderings, however, Goldoni was wafted to Tuscany; and after a little while settled at Pisa; and, as has been said, opened a "studio," and started there as an advocate;—once again, strange as it seems, successfully. Successfully, till the players once more,—coming over by chance from Leghorn,—found him out,—tempted him,—and finally brought him back in triumph to Venice, thenceforward an avowed retainer of Thespis.

From this time forth the memoirs contain little more than the record of the successes and failures of the succession of dramas he poured forth with such wonderful rapidity; and contribute much less than during his more unsettled life to any picture of the life of the times. For the story of the Italian stage and its progress they continue to be interesting; yet even in this respect the most interesting portion of the story is the earlier part; for in that is to be mainly found the record of the advance from the old masked and improvised drama to modern comedy.

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF AN OLD BACHELOR.

I AM that privileged, independent, free, and favoured being, an old bachelor,—privileged, for I may flirt without fear; independent, for no one has a right to say to me, “ You shan’t!” free, for I have no moorings; favoured, for the ladies like me. Yes; I am sure of it, they do like me. Invitations cover my mantelpiece; some are wedged in between the looking-glass and its frame, but they are too many to be held in there, and have overflowed upon the marble sea below. “ Come to dinner, dear Mr. Paul.” Paul is a piece of my name, and I don’t choose to give more of it in print. “ Come to tea, dear Mr. Paul;” “ Come to the play, dear Mr. Paul;” or, “ My good friend, will you take charge of my dear girls to-morrow at the Monday Popular? and on Sunday at the Zoological Gardens, and on Wednesday at the Flower Show, and on Thursday at the Royal Academy?” Yes; they like and trust me. They trust me because I am an ugly, ungainly little man, very short of stature, and of a figure which their pretty daughters call, in their pretty slang, “ awfully funny;” and they like me because I have been in the world and know London society well, and Paris society a little, and have a queer anecdote or two at my command, and know a few facts in modern biography, such as might appear quite suitable if introduced into the leading chapter of a modern French novel. That is why I am popular to mothers; and as to the girls, they like me because I like them, and because I have read a smattering of poetry and seen a few plays, and am sufficiently fond of music to endure two hours of Joachim’s violin on occasion, though I am horribly jealous of him all the time, for they sit gazing at him as if they were magnetised,—I mean mesmerised,—in a regular coma, with their cheeks flushing up. I suppose that is the way the Dryads looked at Orpheus; just as if he were the only man in the world worth looking at; and honestly I don’t think Herr Joachim is really handsomer than I am. I suppose if I could fiddle they would gaze at me like that; but it is too late to learn now. They never change colour for me, they only laugh when I worship them; but then what a smile that pretty Alice has! though she mocks, I bid her laugh again. What a bright light in those blue eyes, what pearls for teeth, what,—“ Oh! oh! Mr. Paul, what are you about?” Was that her voice that checked me, or am I dreaming? Halt, sir! old bachelors must never dream. Well! it is not my present purpose to talk

about these captivating young friends of mine. Perhaps some day I may say something more about them, but now I am going to expatiate upon the charms of an old friend. What? an old man? oh! no; emphatically no. An old woman? No, not that either, but a woman, and a true one,—a friend and an honest one, of some years' standing now; and friendship is counted old as soon as it has reached its teens, its ordinary date of life being not remarkably long. Its statistics fairly reckoned would, I believe, show a pretty heavy rate of mortality.

My nature not being inconstant, however, I have actually one old friend; her name is Goldwin, a pretty enough name, I think, but her own is prettier; that is only her *nom de plume*. I mean to say her *nom de plume à moi*. It is what I intend to call her in these pages. For I like to keep her in a manner to myself, and she also will not suffer her privacy to be rudely invaded. From these observations on the suppression of her name you would naturally and reasonably and justly infer, that if it were publicly announced it would be publicly recognised, and therefore that she must be in some sort a celebrity.

That is the case, and I have to explain in what way my friend is famous, and I shall begin in the popular negative style. She is not a novelist;—is not that fact enough in itself to distinguish her?—not a poet, not a painter, not a sculptor, not a doctor, not a dancer, not a lecturer, not—, hold; that's enough of elimination. She is an Actress, and a very distinguished one, and not an actress of the new school, which is no school, where nothing is taught and nothing is learned beyond the art of hair washing and lip painting; but of the fine old school, where there was an earnest master and a thoughtful pupil; where it was thought important to study the science of elocution, the graces of articulation and of modulation, dignity of demeanour, the meaning of poetry, and the moods of passion. In all these things Effie Goldwin was accomplished, so that I have sat for hours in the pit, not merely to admire her beauty,—though that, I must own, was admirable,—but to note all the delicate varieties of her art. Before long I passed on from that distant admiration to pleasant acquaintance, and from pleasant acquaintance to cordial friendship. It was not for me to fall in love with her. I knew better than that, and I was rational enough to be content with being comfortable. And what can be more comfortable, more snug, more cosy than Effie Goldwin's little parlour? Soon after the first visit she found that I was not happy in her cold stately reception room, and admitted me to the friendly hearth of her sitting-room on the first floor. There, with just room for an arm-chair on either side of the fire-place, with a cat and dog, by name Shandy and Punch, lying snoozing on the rug, and with permission to put one's feet on the fender, it is pleasant to talk and still pleasanter to listen. A pianoforte in one corner of the room, and walls covered with pictures, photos, and engravings, and

tables loaded with a delicious litter of books, suggest ideas of literature and art, and give life to the room,—the best kind of life.

What a home for an old bachelor in his solitary evenings ! I never fail to go to it when I may, and I may whenever my friend is free from theatrical or other engagements. One evening I took a fancy to read aloud to her. I read a scene from Shakspeare, and she quite choked me with compliments. I can see her smile and her admiring attitude now, as she stood with extended arms and glittering eyes surveying me. "Why," said she, "you are a real genius; what a pity the stage couldn't have you!" "Oh," said I humbly, "genius isn't enough, it would never do; my figure is not fit for Hamlet." "For Hamlet!" she exclaimed, with a laugh as clear as the first song of Chanticleer on a sunny morning; "for Hamlet, no; I never thought of that;—but for the grave-digger!"

I was offended, and took up my hat; but not with a good dramatic effect, for the dog and the cat had been at play with it, and had rolled it under the table, where I had to follow it, and whence I emerged in the midst of an avalanche of periodicals, newspapers, magazines, and French novels, with the table-cover wrapping me in its ample folds; some way I got quite entangled in it, and had to be liberated by the lady whom I had meant to wither by the sublimity of my frown, and who was laughing with an enjoyment which seemed infinite. And now I hurried out of the room with a half bow and an incomplete good night, and wholly intended never to come again; but I came back the very next evening, and it was then, perhaps, to compensate for my affront, that my excellent friend told me a little story of her early days. She looked especially picturesque that evening, with her abundant hair crisped out in as many ripples as the sea when a fresh breeze from the east curls it tightly up and a million little suns dance in its wavelets. She wore some kind of soft red shawl over her white bodice, and the effect of the colour was glowing and brilliant, and it melted very agreeably into the dusk of a black silk petticoat. Her eyes sparkled, too, as she recalled the old time which I brought back to her by some well-put questions, and it was pretty to see the dog, with his paw on her lap, looking up in her face and giving an occasional howl when she reached a pathetic passage, as if he understood it all quite well and sympathised with every word she spoke,—and so did I.

Poor little Effie Goldwin ! She told me that her father was an officer,—improvident, as officers often are; and one fine day, very indiscreetly, he sold out. From this day troubles gathered quickly round him. No more money came into the treasury, and a great deal went out. There was a second wife and a large family of little children; there were still more creditors than children; and, finally, an execution was put into their house. It was a house in Mayfair,—old habits clinging about the ex-officer and keeping him still in a

neighbourhood too expensive for his means, which were in fact no means. The father sat in silent gloom, the poor step-mother cried helplessly,—the misery of the family was complete. Little Rachel, the youngest, at the age when nature delighted to expand in rosy flesh, was white-faced, with lean shoulders and sunken chest. Effie was the eldest; she was just thirteen, and looked at the poor, half-starved Rachel till a strong sense of responsibility settled down upon her. One morning, when the child was crying with cold, Effie hugged her in her arms, and, rocking her to and fro, seeking to make her thin blood circulate, she, sobbing too, said, "Don't cry, child,—don't look so cold; I will get something to warm you. You shall have enough to eat, and I will buy it for you. I am strong, and I will work for you all." A sudden resolution came to her,—strange as sudden,—and now made her eyes bright with hope, and she rallied from her late dejected stoop, and carried her head quite high as she went to look for her father. Where did she get that simple resolution of hers? Was it what we are wont to call an inspiration,—something beyond the scope of reason? She found the unhappy man mournfully staring into the embers of a dying fire, which he stirred from time to time with a listless action. "What do you want, child?" he asked, with that asperity in his tone which belongs to affliction.

"I want to help you," she replied cheerfully; "I want to earn money for you. I mean to go upon the stage."

"The stage! What has put that into your head? You have no stage connections: you have not seen above half a dozen plays in your whole life. What should you know of the stage? you are a mere baby; who would engage you? You have never learned to act. Go back to your room, you silly girl; and don't look like that, or I shall think you are delirious."

"Oh, father, listen to me! I have a feeling, a hope, a belief that I could act. Do let me try to act; let me see if I can get an engagement,—oh, do let me try!"

It is wonderful what a real, earnest desire will do. I believe, if you wish with a will, you can move all earth in your favour; if with a good will, heaven helps; if with an evil one, the ruler of the other region steps in with assistance. Perhaps if I had wished enough,—I mean with enough faith,—for a wife, I might have got one; but I never could sufficiently concentrate my inclinations into one focus for that.

However, little Effie's whole energies were centred on this one point, and it was assuredly heaven's aid that came to her rescue. Her father listened, argued, wondered, remonstrated, wondered again, and finally gave way; and so the father and daughter found themselves two or three hours after her first resolve standing at the door of a small theatre in the east of London, requesting an interview with

the lessee. They were admitted to his presence, the little girl trembling with agitation.

The manager of that small theatre was a worthy poor old man, who had seen better days, who had known the toils, the troubles, the vicissitudes of such a life as consists in a struggle to live and to live honestly; without honesty, in a great wicked city like London, the problem is easily solved; with it the solution is difficult, and occasionally impossible. This man was innocent of swindling and above baseness; incapable of being the owner of a "Pandemonium Theatre in Foreignengineering Square," or of directing a ballet with a "Nudita" for its attraction; incapable of any vicious work to promote his fortunes,—this was some thirty years ago; is there such a man to be found now in such a place?—a real good man, with nothing to wear but an old grey dressing-gown, but wearing that with a certain dignity of demeanour which perhaps his simplicity and unsullied conscience gave him, or perhaps the habits of his more prosperous days. His small red-bordered eyes had true kindness in them, and the lean and hungry look held not the most distant relationship with malevolence. There was a sense of humour in the smile with which he listened to the assertion of a child of fourteen,—who had never acted, nor seen much acting,—that she believed she could play a great variety of parts; but when, perceiving the doubtful twinkle in his eye, the little Effie began to plead her cause more earnestly,—when, in her entreating tones, a sweet tremulous music rose and fell,—when her glittering glances were subdued with the mist of tenderness,—when her flushed cheeks paled with her trouble, his humour gave way to kindly sympathy, and he pressed the child's little hands between both his own, and said, "You shall try, dear,—you shall try; never mind if you fail,—what harm? as you say, we can but try."

Effie, impetuous in all her feelings, poured out her gratitude in tears upon the cold, wrinkled, bony hand of the good old man, and kissed it more than once. Her father stood by, absorbed in painful thought; his position was dismal enough. The exaltation which Effie felt in the prospect of relieving her family by a great effort, the ardent hope, the trembling desire, were not for him; he only saw his daughter a victim to his failures, to his indiscretions, to his improvidence; nor did he share her belief in the good the future might reveal. He was sacrificing his Iphigenia, and, as he feared, not to the gods.

He made his bargain, therefore, with Mr. Muddlework, the owner of the playhouse, and of the grey dressing-gown, as quickly as possible, and took his daughter back to the home of want. In another fortnight light broke in upon the darkness; Effie's beautiful voice and pretty face did not fail to make an impression on her audience, and her energy and good-will, her vivacity and excellence of character, won the esteem of the manager and the kindly regard of his com-

pany. She was ready for anything and everything ; would take any part,—from a groom-boy to an empress,—and the journeymen shoemakers' apprentices, grocers' boys, and others in the pit thought her so fascinating in all her shapes that they were not content to pay her the homage of mere temporary applause, but would send round to the stage entrance anonymous offerings wrapped in brown paper, through which occasionally oozed a mysterious stickiness, or a strong savoury odour,—sometimes a fish-like smell. All these donations came with a "grace devouring," for they were all supposed to be good to eat,—lollipops, Bath-buns, salt herrings, cakes, tarts, and such-like dainties. These devoted youths, expressing their affection in the style of the lover in the old ballad of *Greensleeves*, who, you may remember, thought himself horribly ill used when the lady of his love swallowed his pastry and rejected his suit. But the youths of the *Muddlework* playhouse were more generous, they gave without a hope of receiving. The act of worship brought its own blessing. To imagine the gifted Effie consuming their viands, assimilating their gifts, absorbing into her physical system the tangible signs of their metaphysical passion was a sufficient reward for their chivalrous adoration ; and such is the proper feeling of every true lover,—he should always be prepared to join in that melodious chorus which occurs in one of the most charming of English comedies :—

" We bent the knee before her,
With a worship nigh to sin,
Predestined to adore her,
Without a hope to win."

How often I might have sung thus if I could but sing ! As it is, I have often croaked it to myself in a hoarse whisper in the trying hour of shaving. Well, never was devotion less appreciated than that of those amorous grocers' boys. Effie each night cheerfully filled her pockets with their offerings, thinking little of the donors and much of the dainties ; and it was, after all, the pale little Rachel's enfeebled physical system which was fated to absorb them. Not the red lips of the blooming actress flowering into beauty, but the pale ones of the wizened baby were smeared with Cupid's tributary sweets.

Among Effie's silent adorers, content only to gaze on light and then to vanish into the land of shadows, was one not intended for obscurity, whose own light at a later date shone fitfully and brightly in strange electric gleams upon the stage, who had a genius which all could recognise, but which few could describe, and none could imitate. But he knew nothing about that in those early days of his life. He only knew that when he saw Effie move and heard her speak, it was like warming himself at a blazing fire. He was a carpenter's boy ; and when he got leave one night to help to shift a scene, and found himself at the wing, and felt the stir of the young actress's dress as she ran past him, he thought himself promoted to the highest happiness a human

being could ever be permitted to enjoy. Effie knew nothing about it till long afterwards, when they met as two celebrities, and he himself told her that his first inspiration came from her. Her youth must be her excuse for not discovering the admiration of which she was the object in the first instance. Her whole mind at that time was set upon earning money, and the woman's pleasure in the act of pleasing was not yet fully developed. She no doubt got her proper share of that pleasure in due time, and properly appreciated it. I hate a woman who is indifferent to this function of her life. I love to see her so diffident that every little tribute to herself from the stronger sex comes to her as a consolation. I love her when she is generally gratified by any show of homage. I adore her when she is especially sensitive to mine. But this is by-the-bye; for, as I have said, homage was not what Effie sought after at that time. Her great sensation was reserved for the receipt of her first weekly salary. The sum bestowed was not much, yet it seemed more to her than all that she has since touched. Her joy multiplied it to her imagination till it became infinite. She thought that the end of her wealth was out of reach, and no sooner did she feel her pockets full than she made haste to empty them. Blithely, busily, trippingly, and prettily, no doubt, she ran in and out of grocers' shops and haberdashers', making purchases for her family. There was a good straw hat for Rachel, who wanted protection,—not from the sun, for England is not afflicted with that possession, but from rain, hail, snow, and cold fog,—and then came half a pound of tea for the evening meal; and this luxury, which we now look upon as a necessity not merely twice but three times a day, had not been tasted by Effie's sad, sinking family for many a long week. The clamorous delight of the children when this new spring of life was introduced upon the table warmed the young actress's heart, and her eyes shone with such a new enthusiasm as turned her step-mother's listless look into a sudden glow of admiration. I have not the slightest inclination to be moral,—quite the reverse,—but it seems to me that this home-feast was the most noble triumph that Effie Goldwin enjoyed through the whole of her successful career. She looked across that little tea-table into boundless space. Beyond the horizon she saw prospects strange and sweet;—a happy home for those she loved; wealth showered on them by her hands; adorers at her feet of course, and a chosen one shining in the radiance of her dawning day like a prince in a fairy tale. Some of her visions were afterwards to be fulfilled, and that is saying a good deal;—for who, amongst us unlucky mortals, ever realises all?

Effie's new-found joys were to have their interruption, and a week came when poor old Muddlework, looking more than usually forlorn, informed her that the receipts of the house were so small that he could not pay her salary out of them. So there was an end to the tea, to the coals, to the little welcome comforts which her family now

expected at her hands. It was, then, for nothing that she had introduced that effective dance into the last farce ; that she had screamed so piercingly as *Crazy Jane* ; that she had driven the villain from the stage with such majestic virtue in the moral melodrama of the "Peasant and the Peer ;" it was for nothing,—though the energy of her action, and its consequent success, were due to the prospect of that reward which she was not to have. Poor little girl ! She fretted, and for three days together looked very pale ; and the small Rachel each day pulling at her dress, and eagerly whispering the question, "Have you brought us anything ?" greatly aggravated her distress. It was on the fourth day of privation, as she was passing Muddlework's abode with slow steps and bent head, that she heard a little tap at the window-pane, and looking up, saw the old man's figure beckoning to her to come to him. So up she went, and then the good Muddlework smiled at her, and with mysterious gesture pointed to the mantelpiece, and led her to it, holding her little hand in his own ; and then he lifted up a small flower-vase, and there, on the space it had occupied, the money was discovered which was her week's salary reclaimed,—all but two shillings of it. As it never took any perceptible time to rouse Effie's sensations, as her sensibilities are vivid and rapid as light itself, she passed immediately from despair to rapture ; she laughed, she cried, she clapped her hands, she jumped, she danced ; and skipping round the close, smoky apartment, which seemed to her at that moment of dimensions no smaller than *La Scala*, she executed the figure of a Spanish bolero, using coins for castanets,—an effect which was introduced into the next drama she played in, by Muddlework's particular desire. The words "particular desire" were introduced into the playbills in consequence ; and it was therefore whispered about among Effie's young admirers in the pit that royalty had come in disguise, attracted by a genius which could no longer be kept concealed. These whispers, though she knew them to be false reports, worked upon Effie's imagination. What, if royalty should come some day ? What, if she should really be destined to be the favourite of a larger and higher sphere ? Was she not getting rather tired of these young apprentices, and their sticky, fishy presents ? Did she not hear in her own voice tones which might move and persuade something better than a grocer's boy ? Had not the manager of the *Hesperus Theatre* been to see her, and had he not said to Mr. Muddlework when he left the playhouse, "Sir, you have got a genius in that girl ?" Might she not then command a higher salary, and play to a more distinguished world ? Such thoughts kept her tossing from one side to another of her little bed at night for two long weeks before she could take a final resolve ; for it went against her grateful disposition to leave the old man whose kindness had given her the first chance, and she reflected with pain that if she had any true talent, his already straitened means would suffer further dimi-

nution by its withdrawal. Each day, when she met him, she meant to say something about it,—each day she went home leaving it unsaid. A lump came in her throat when she tried to reply to the good man's generous praise. When he said, "You are quite my prop and stay, dear," she could not answer, "And therefore I must go away." She could only look wistfully in his face, and remain silent. But Muddlework was true to himself and to her. The manager of the *Hesperus* wrote to him a warm eulogy of Effie Goldwin's merits, and Muddlework shewed her the letter. He saw her flushed cheeks and shining eyes while she read it, and when he took the document from her he folded it slowly up again, and while he did so, said with a sigh,—"I am thinking, my dear, that it might be better for you to make a move now. The *Hesperus* is in a better situation than my house, and is more of a stage for you, and you are very clever,—very clever indeed, my dear,—and should be getting on now in your profession. It is quite clear that the *Hesperus* wants you; so go, and offer your talents there, and don't let me stand in your way. Never mind me,—never mind me."

What a moment was this for Effie; it seemed the fulfilment of a scheme of great ambition, brought about by the very friend whom she feared to offend by entertaining it. In a tumult of delight she flung her arms round the old man's neck, and thanked him again and again. He put her gently from him, and said: "If ever things go wrong at the *Hesperus*, my child, you will come back here; you will always be welcome to me." On this, tears dropped fast from Effie's eyes; at which Miss Asterisk, the leading lady in tragedy, who had been spectator to a part of this little scene, laughed with loud mirth.

It is needless for me to say that there were jealousies in the small sphere ruled by Muddlework, as in all other spheres; and it is not to be supposed that Effie's success gave pleasure to the whole company. No; there was a great deal of regret at her departure when she left Muddlework's troupe to join that of the *Hesperus*; but there was also a certain portion of satisfaction. To Muddlework, however, the parting was unmixed pain, and though he had once candidly seen a good argument for her going, he now saw many excellent reasons why she ought to have stayed. "It is not likely, after all," said he, "that you will fall in with another Mr. Star,"—Mr. Star was his first tragedian,—"or with such comedians as the Brothers Blank; not likely at all; for, besides that they are clever men, they are respectable men." But Effie's high hopes were not to be so lowered, and she went off with her fancy all a-blaze, like the last scene of a pantomime.

The ruling power at the *Hesperus* was a man of more pretension, but of less probity, than Mr. Muddlework. He was more prosperous; the prosperity of this world being given rather to the hard than the tender of heart. He knew how to screw down a genius; and when he asked Effie what salary she had drawn at Muddlework's, and she

told, with her babyish innocence, the exact sum, he said, with a thoughtful air, and with the semblance of a generous resolution, "Well, I think we may venture to add on to that a little something more." And he did add a very little. But the child was content, not knowing her own worth; neither he nor she could know then, that, in the days to come, that condescending manager's widow would apply to this same young Effie Goldwin and implore her out of her abundant earnings to pay the expenses of the potentate's funeral!

It would not always answer to know what thread the Fates are spinning for us; but it would be sometimes very diverting. What would Mr. Airlie have thought if that little actress had replied to his offer of a small augmentation of salary, "I am not sure, sir, that I shall ever be able to pay for your burial at that rate?"

The new theatre was larger and colder than Muddlework's, and the first impression was less pleasant; but the additional income was, after all, of some value, and it was presently increased, when the talent of the actress became more pronounced, so that she now began to feel herself to be somebody, and to look forward to being the heroine of many an acted drama; and of one, perhaps, unacted. Under these circumstances the single white muslin gown, which hitherto she had worn in all her parts, only changing the bow of her pink sash from back to front to make a variety of costume, became intolerable to her. Her exalted imagination saw pompous apparel beyond it. She said to herself that she was no lily of the field, and must take thought of her raiment. Gorgeous things passed before her in her dreams. Would not her golden hair,—she had the uncommon beauty of golden hair, with dark eyes,—look brilliant adorned with pearls? And would not the lithe movement of her slender figure show to advantage the radiance of a white satin robe? Might she not contrive to put something by from her gains without injury to her family, and with the help of her own energetic hands build herself up a splendid dress, such as would well become her new leading character in the forthcoming drama of "The Archduke's Bride?" A sale of goods, at fabulously low prices, advertised in the shop window of a failing linen-draper in the neighbourhood, determined her, and she began her savings and her rehearsals together; but she was within three days of the actual performance of the piece before a sufficient sum was garnered up for the purchases she had to make, the items being a piece of white satin for a dress, a row of white beads for her hair, a yard of white satin ribbon for covering a pair of old black shoes, and a pair of new white silk stockings. It was a time of breathless excitement when she put down her money on the counter, and saw the white satin in which she was to captivate the world folded up by the shopman; and when she tucked the parcel under her arm, and felt herself in full possession, her heart beat as wildly as, I am assured by all the poets, a bridegroom's beats on his wedding day;—but, beyond

what the poets tell me, I know nothing about that. It was difficult to her to eat, to drink, to speak; that piece of satin contained the very essence of her life,—all thought, all hope, all passion centred in that raiment of shining white,—she locked herself up, that she and the satin might have no prying interlopers, while she cut, and pinned, and basted, and fitted it to her shape. The looking-glass was placed in every conceivable position, in order that she might see every portion of her figure in turns; on the floor, on a chair, on the chest-of-drawers, on the bed. By day there were too many interruptions for the proper progress of the work, and she gave her nights to it; and, in her strong excitement, recognised no fatigue. Every stitch was a new hope, and the exultation with which she cut off her last thread on the third morning had a kind of ache in it, because the labour was over which had been the source of such high delight to her. But there was the satin gleaming in its glory on her little bed. There it was, beautiful to her eyes even then. What would it be when the night came, and it would reflect a thousand rays of splendour across the foot-lights to an enraptured crowd of spectators, as she moved about the stage, lightly, in her first cheerful act, plaintively in her last tragic scenes? She saw her own image thus projected in space; she saw and loved it. But there was no time to be lost in gazing; she must go to her final rehearsal; so she put away the dear dress in a drawer, and hurried down to the theatre.

Inspired by the thought of her grand costume, she acted with such fire and flame as had never been struck out of her before; and her fellow comedians stared at her with suspended breath, and the manager gave her his arm as far as the door of the theatre when the rehearsal was over. After this every step she took seemed to her a progress in triumph. When she reached home she rushed in among her astonished people proclaiming to them at the top of her voice her immeasurable greatness. Oh, they looked dull; they evidently did not perceive what a splendid creature she was going to be. She would lock herself up again, once more alone with her satin dress, and have her visions to herself in solitude.

Time went on, and at last the hour of representation was close at hand. She piled up her articles of costume carefully, got an old table-cloth to fold them in, wrapped it round them, pinned them all up together, and put the parcel down on the small horse-hair sofa near the window in the little parlour on the ground floor, and, too agitated to wait for the ordinary preparations, flew to the kitchen to get a cup of hot strong tea from Anne the cook. She could hardly be served quickly enough.

“Make haste, Anne!—good Anne, dear Anne! In a quarter of an hour I must be there. Soon it will begin; soon I shall be discovered,—while the curtain lifts to slow music,—in my beautiful new dress,—my bridal dress.”

"Ah, Miss Effie, and beautiful you will be in it; and may you wear such an one soon for yourself; and then, miss, I shall ask for a place in a pew to see you."

"Oh, Anne, don't talk like that. But I'll tell you what, Anne, if I do marry, it shall be nothing less than an archduke, I promise you."

With this assurance she left Anne, who followed her light flying movement with smiling eyes, and muttered, "God bless her!" At one bound Effie reached the parlour, there to take up her treasure.

Just think of her astonishment; the horse-hair sofa was empty! No parcel there; no table-cloth; no dress; no anything;—bare, all bare. She stared at it in bewilderment. Who had removed her precious bundle? She flew to question her step-mother, her sisters, her father;—had they moved it? No; they had not been in the parlour. What! how, how could this be,—what could it mean? The things were gone.

"Stolen!" said her father, gloomily. "Look, the window was open; it was easy for a thief to put his hand through and reach the parcel from the sofa, without the risk of getting through himself."

"Stolen!" shrieked Effie in reply. "Impossible! Stolen it cannot be. Oh, no, no, no! No, it shall not be! it must not be! No, no; I tell you it could not be,—that is not true. No one would do that; no one would do such a cruelty as that; no thief would come to steal from the house of want, to steal my hard earnings,—my hope, my fruit of long toil, my one pleasure, which I bought with so much pain! No, no, no, I tell you!"

Her words were interrupted by her screams and sobs; but the more she called out "no," the more she inwardly knew that the true answer was "yes." Her tears fell fast on her hot face, and she flung herself down upon that black, hard, harsh, hideously shining mockery of a couch in passionate anguish. The impetuous temperament, which has since been subdued in the school of life, had then known no constraint, and her emotions had her completely in their power. Her bitter cries could be heard through the whole little narrow street where she lived, and a crowd gathered round the door of the house, eager to see what was up, hoping for some events to give them something to think about and talk about,—a murder, perhaps, or a fire.

And then through the crowd, a small, pale, shrivelled, feeble woman, about fifty years old, made her way, and came trembling into the house where trouble was. This was no less a person than Mrs. Capper, the schoolmistress. She was a widow, and lived wretchedly enough by teaching small children to read and write. Her house was just opposite to that of the Goldwins, and occasionally, when borne down by headache and anxiety, she had been utterly unable to deal with a contumacious infant, Effie had gone in to her assistance.

Also she sometimes came to consult the young actress on a knotty question of orthography or a difficult bit of arithmetic, for Effie had been at a good school in her childhood, and had learned many things. She was, because of her tender years, the pet of Mrs. Capper; but because of her superior instruction, she was her protectress.

It was with great trepidation that the schoolmistress entered the little parlour, for she recognised Effie's voice amidst her shrieks. When she saw her suffering she flung her thin arms round her in sympathetic tribulation, and when she heard the cause of grief, she well understood it; for had she not seen Effie's candle alight through the long night? and did she not know that she was then sitting up to make a dress which was to make her fortune? Had she not been called in to see that beautiful parcel of things on the great day of shopping? She sat beside the poor child, fanned her a little with the corners of her old shawl, scrubbed away her tears with the same garment, and then began to cry heartily herself.

"Oh, my dear, my dear, dear, dear darling!" she said, sobbing, "and it is getting on for seven o'clock, and what shall we do?"

"What is seven o'clock to me?" cried Effie. "What can it be to me? What do I care for it, when I can't appear? for I've got no dress to wear."

"No dress to wear! Poor, poor dear thing! and so clever!" muttered Mrs. Capper; "and so pretty, and such a darling too! Oh, what a shame it is! What shall we do? I should like to roast that thief alive, that I should; that I would, if I could only catch him!" To Mrs. Capper's temporary ferocity succeeded a dejection so deep, that she subsided into a silence of three minutes' duration, out of which she emerged to say, "I have an idea, my love, a bright thought, a kind of hope for you. There is my wedding gown, still carefully put by; a green silk, dear, with two breadths in it, and never a stain,—only perhaps rather a strong colour. You shall have it; I will lend it to you, if it will do for your play. I will give it to you, dear, for your own,—for your very own. Do you hear that!—the wedding gown that I have kept as a treasure for these thirty years? It is yours; I give it to you. Do you hear that, I say? Don't cry any more. You shall have it directly; I will go and fetch it now myself; only don't cry any more."

A loud hysterical laugh from Effie followed this well-meant but miserable proposition,—a laugh which was followed by a fresh storm of weeping such as shattered all her frame. She was driven before the wind, shivered to pieces, broken into shreds,—no courage, no heart, no hope, no voice left.

"It is getting late," said Mrs. Capper; "what shall we do?"

"I must take her with me to the Hesperus at once," said her father.

"I won't go," said Effie, and sank down upon the floor.

"You must," said her father. "Come, come; we will tell the whole story to Mr. Airlie, the manager, and perhaps he will give you a pretty dress to wear."

Effie was dragged to the theatre by her father, and sobbed all the way. Mr. Airlie received them stiffly. Only a few hours since he had applauded the young actress, and had even called her "the hope of his house;" yet now he listened to her grief unmoved. There was even a kind of cunning smile on his face when her story came to an end.

"Well," he said, "if it is so, it can't be helped. It's of no use to talk to me about it. Your child, sir, is a clever actress, no doubt; but I don't replace the players' lost dresses; if I did there would be no end to that game."

An insolent emphasis marked these words, which the father must have resented, if he could have afforded resentment; but he depended upon Effie's salary, and Effie's salary depended upon the manager. So he could not afford it. "Go and dress, my dear," he muttered to his daughter, anxious to be rid of the sight of her suffering.

This word "dress" was the signal for a fresh burst of passion. "Dress! How can I? I have no dress, and I won't act. No, I won't!"

"Then your part will be taken by Miss Point," said the manager; "and good-bye to you and your salary."

Effie was led by her father, weeping, to the dressing-room, and there she put on the dirty white muslin again and the faded sash. A bit of the muslin flounce she actually tore off in her desperation, but the only result of that indulgence of her feelings was, that she had to cobble it up again as fast as she could, when the bell rang for the rise of the curtain. What had become now of her lively first act? The vivacity was gone with the white satin; tears were still dropping from her eyes; her voice was husky; and she was at intervals interrupted by a sob. Her admirers saw that something was the matter. New-comers said, "What a whining actress, and how very hoarse she is!" She went home like a bruised reed. The manager was dismayed and disappointed. He spoke harshly to her. She fretted till she fell ill, and an intermittent fever, with occasional fits of wandering, in which the words "Archduke," "Bride," and "white satin," were frequently reiterated. She was advised to try the effect of change of scene and air in default of a change of dress. So she accepted a provincial engagement, and shook the dust of the London boards from off her feet.

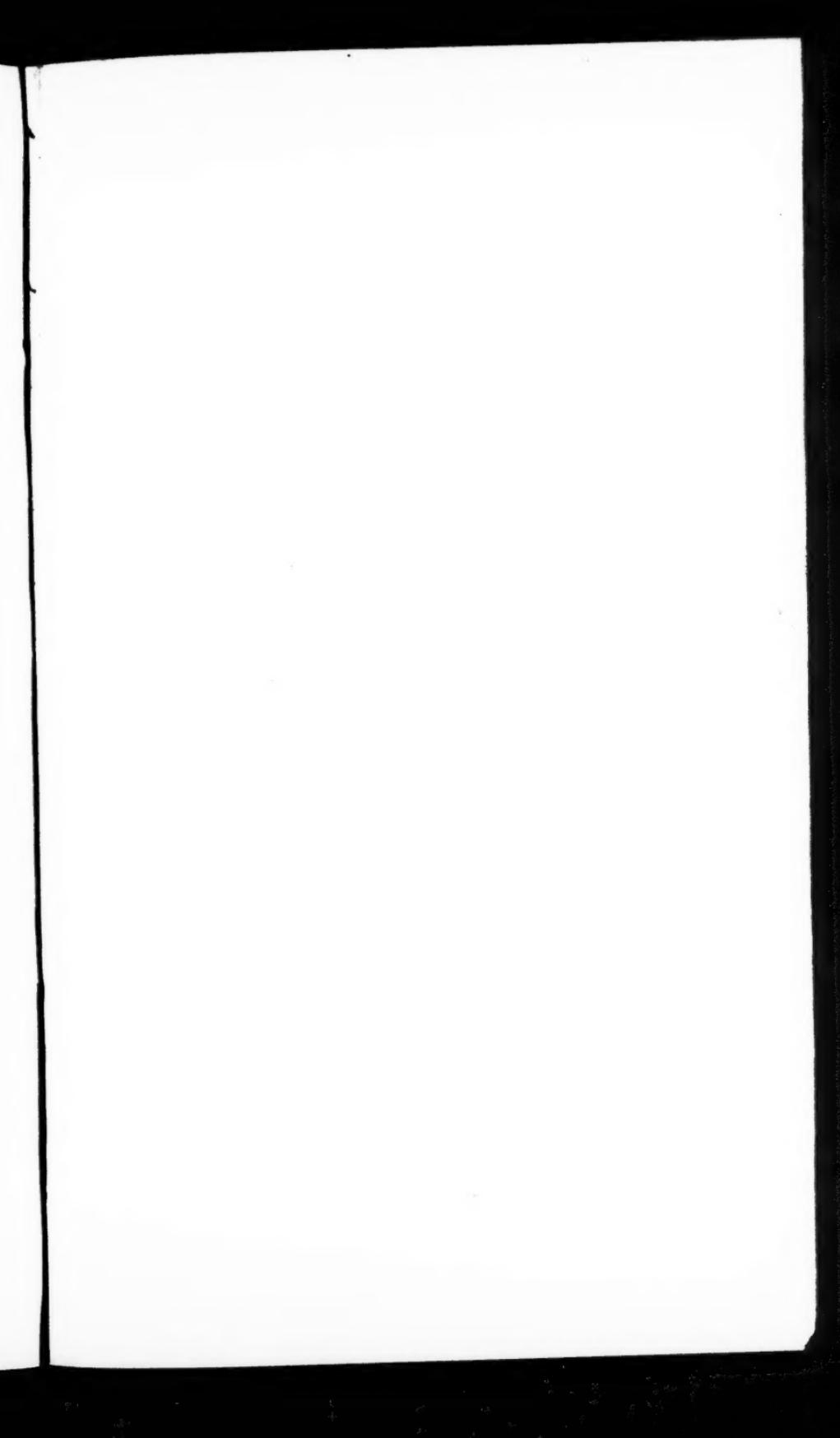
Her appearance in the provinces was a success, and she returned from her tour with handsome offers from a fashionable theatre in London. Then her fame was in a few weeks' time established, and from this date her progress in her profession was unchecked. She

has tasted the admiration of peers and poets. Few actresses have won more of popular favour.

Some ten years since it happened to her to be robbed by a burglar of two hundred pounds' worth of jewellery. She was annoyed, of course; but, remembering the agony of the stolen satin, this loss seemed comparatively light. That had been her all in all. These jewels were only a portion of her possessions: and, besides, only to youth such high hopes are given as fall with the shock which kills.

Effie Goldwin, though not exactly of a calm temperament, is philosophical now compared with what she was in her teens. I ought to say that she esteems as one of her best treasures a letter which the honest old Muddlework wrote to her on the news of her first great success, and in which he told her of the warmth it brought to his heart, and says how proud he was to see the poor little girl who had come to him in trouble and want now winning fame and fortune. It was not much part, he humbly said, that he had in her success, but what little belonged to him he loved to dwell upon. The kind-hearted Mrs. Cappé, too, lived to congratulate her favourite on the possession of many satin raiments; and this very year it happened that Effie Goldwin found herself seated at dinner next to Mr. Star, formerly Muddlework's obscure pet tragedian, and now a well-known Shakspearian actor. So the wheel of life turns round.

But let me not forget that the wheel of time rolls on too,—the evening gathers in. That dreadful man is coming to draw my curtains and close my shutters. I will escape all that shrieking and banging. Where is my hat? Where is my umbrella? I never go out in London without my umbrella. Stay, Thomas, give me my coat also. There, now, I am all right, and I will make sure of a pleasant time by looking in upon Effie Goldwin. I hurry on till I reach the well-known door-step in Dash Street. I ring the dear old bell quite noisily in my enthusiastic desire to get in, and soon feel the cordial touch of my friend's outspread hands. I see that warm glow and that frank smile with which she is for ever fresh and young, as she speaks her honest welcome. "Is that you, Mr. Paul? Dear Mr. Paul, come in,—pray come in," and so on; and then Punch the dog, and Shandy the cat, express their satisfaction after their own fashion. Punch's tail raps the ground while he slobbers over my hand; and Shandy, purring his ecstasy, leaps into my lap and digs his claws deep into my flesh. "Be quiet, Punch! be still, Shandy! for to-night my friend is going to read to me with her beautiful voice. Let us have a scene from '*As You Like It.*'"





"You will promise to let me know before—you bind her to any other," Ben repeated, bending over the little table which stood between them.